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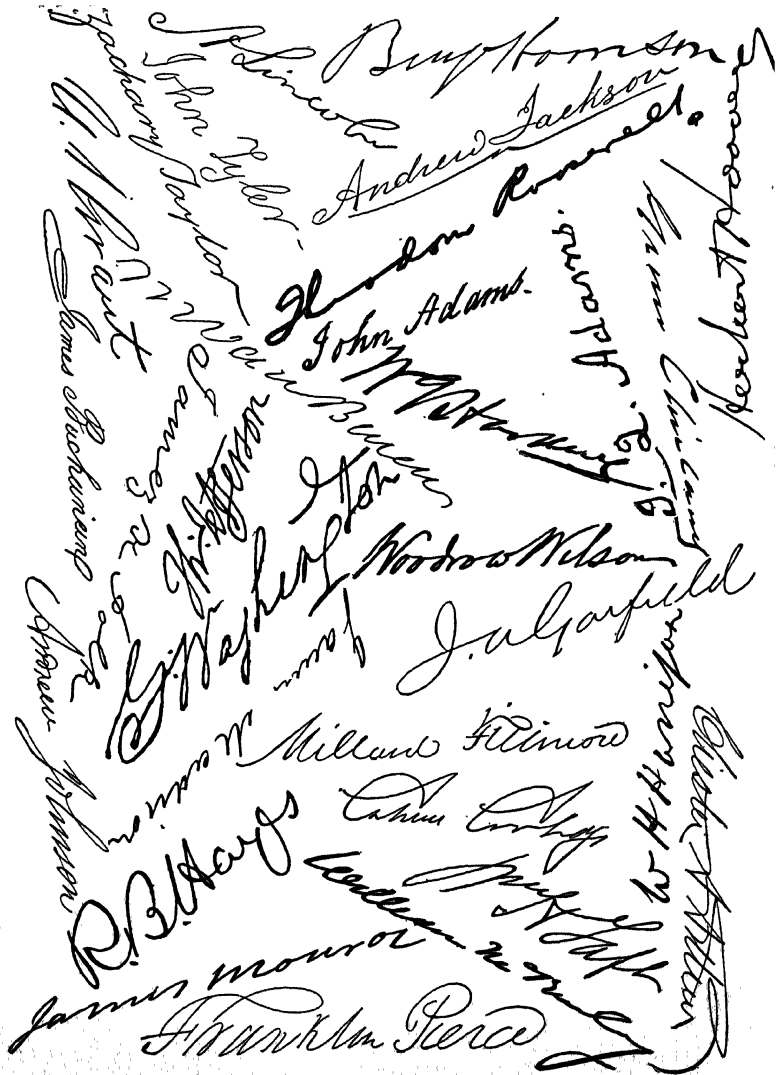
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The Book of
AMERICAN PRESIDENTS





[Frontispiece]

The Book of
American Presidents

BY ESSE V. HATHAWAY

Illustrated by
SAMUEL BERNARD SCHAEFFER

WHITTLESEY HOUSE
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FOREWORD

In the summer of 1787, a group of American men gathered in Philadelphia to draw up a Constitution which was to "make secure the blessings of Liberty for the United States of America." Among those men were some who had helped to write the Declaration of Independence. Among them were some who had fought in the American Revolution. A quarter of a century of steady devotion to their country's freedom bound these men together.

And bound with them were other men—men from broad rich estates, from stately colonial mansions, from prosperous offices in flourishing cities; men from rude cabins, from tiny stump-filled fields, from small shops in small villages; men from colleges, from log schoolhouses, from long hours of pouring over old worn volumes under candlelight. All of these had strained their ears to catch the sound of that old Independence bell. All of them had fought shoulder to shoulder to make America free. Where they came from, who they were, had made no difference in the way they had faced fire on the battle field, in the way they faced hunger, cold, discouragement, defeat, and victory. All that counted, when those tests came, was the man himself. If he measured up to the test, well and good. If not, nothing else mattered.

With those men in mind, with their own long years of sacrifice also in mind, the Philadelphia group labored on through long hot days, patiently adding section after section, clause after clause to the Constitution. At last they came to the section where they had to state in whom the executive power was to be vested. Without any fine

words, without any high-sounding phrases, those men proceeded simply, directly to say that the man holding that power should be called president; that he should be at least thirty-five years of age; that he should be a natural born citizen of the United States and a resident of his country at least fourteen years; and that he should be ready and willing to "take the following oath—

> "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

That was all. No question of family, of fortune, of education, of past experience. Nothing more. But back of those words—what? Faith—faith unswerving and high—in the honor of American men. Faith in the wisdom, the fairness, the far vision of the American people. In the years between now and that long-ago summer of 1787 how has that faith been kept?

ESSE V. HATHAWAY.

NEW YORK,
September, 1931.

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The Book of
AMERICAN PRESIDENTS



Chapter I

STARTING RIGHT

I. GEORGE WASHINGTON

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It was the morning of the day before Christmas, 1783. Long before dawn, George Washington had been up and away riding south toward Mt. Vernon. He meant to be there, at home, before his own fireplace for Christmas Eve. Only yesterday he had handed in his resignation as commander-in-chief of the colonial army to the Senate convened at Annapolis. And, although it seemed much longer, it was less than a month since he had said good-by to his officers in New York.

That had been a hard day. Men who had shared cold, hunger, discouragement, who had gone down to defeat together, who had fought grimly shoulder to shoulder eight long years to bring final victory to this new land—why, of course, they were bound to each other by ties unlike any other. Not a man among them had been ashamed of the tears blinding him as he said that good-by.

Where were they all to-day? At home, or riding as he was, no doubt, over some lonely road at peace with themselves, eager to reach their own firesides—and to stay there. Cornwallis had surrendered. The British had marched out of New York. Their work was done. Now let some one else say what next was to be done.

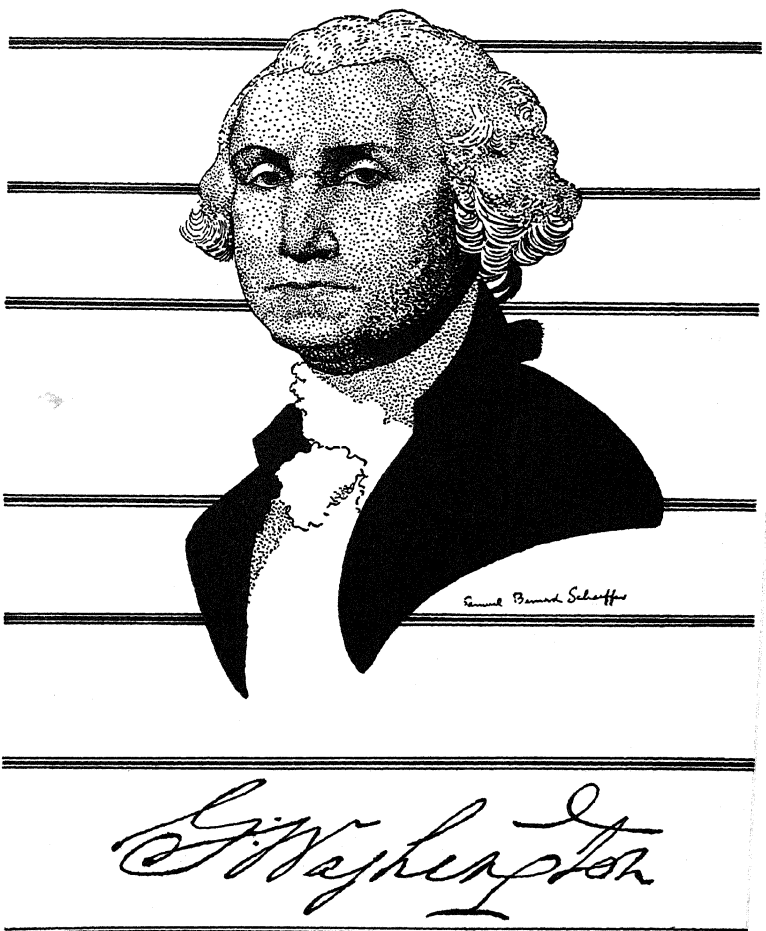
As for him—the General shook his broad shoulders and looked out over the country beginning to take shape in the

early gray light—he was already down in Virginia. Not only in Virginia, but in that part of the loved land between the Potomac and the Rappahannock held most dear to his family. It was here that his great-grandfather, straight from old Sulgrave, England, back in 1657, had taken up his first acres of land, built his first home, set about thriftily adding more land, and then had ridden out from his new estate in the wilderness as the chosen representative of his neighbors in the Virginia House of Burgesses.

Yes, the valley had been kind to the Washington family. And they, in turn, had kept faith with the valley. Augustine Washington, the General's own father, had continued to add land to that which he inherited until he owned some half-dozen plantations. He had also continued the family custom of working actively in the House of Burgesses. It could never be said that the Washington family lived to themselves. Even while accumulating rich lands and becoming known as a family of wealth, no one of them ever forgot for a minute his allegiance to Virginia or to his own community within Virginia.

George Washington was born with that family record facing him. When he was still a little fellow, only nine, his father had died, bequeathing him vast stretches of land out along the Rappahannock, so that he had never known what it was to be free from the family's feeling of responsibility for developing and protecting possessions. Maybe that was one of the reasons he had always taken everything so seriously in life; that, and the fact he had had to work so hard for everything he ever learned.

At any rate he had never shirked any task; not even those set him by his first teacher, the village church sexton. And when he was only thirteen, he had taken to heart so seriously his mother's long talks on what a Virginia gentle-


Samuel Bernard Schaffer
G. Washington

man's manners should be that he had written long pages of rules on the subject. But even while doing all of that, he had also spent long hours out-of-doors, growing tall, broad-shouldered, and strong, as he worked at the thing he liked best—surveying. Evidently not only the thing he liked best but a thing he must have done wonderfully well; for when but fourteen he was plotting the neighbors' fields and two years later, at sixteen, was completing his course in surveying.

That same year, he had begun his first really important job of surveying when he went out to establish the boundary of Lord Fairfax's huge estate, stretching west to the Alleghenies. That was when he had had his first glimpse of how vast a wilderness of territory lay beyond his own settled valley. That was, also, when he had had his first experience in sleeping out under the stars with only a thin blanket to keep him warm, in eating his simple meals from fresh green leaves, and sometimes in hearing the soft-footed red man slip by in the darkness with a fresh scalp dangling from his belt.

Despite all of these distracting experiences, George Washington did his work so well that the next year saw him claiming his commission of public surveyor of Fairfax County. Before he was twenty he had begun to buy land for himself. Then had come his first great grief in the death of his brother Lawrence. After that, according to family agreement, Mt. Vernon, Lawrence Washington's home, with its wide sweeping view of the Potomac, its well-cultivated fields, its old gardens with low, trimly cut hedge rows, its memories of happy boyhood visits, became the home of George Washington.

How many times he had gone out from and come back to that home! He had been only twenty at his brother's

death. Now, December 24, 1783, he was fifty-one. The years between had certainly been full of red-blooded living. There was the time when he was only twenty-one and Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia had sent him through the wilderness to what is now the western line of Pennsylvania to warn the French to give up their trespassing on British claims. And he had gone with only Jacob von Braem, his fencing and drill master, a Dutch soldier of fortune; Christopher Gist, a guide; and two servants. It had been winter when he started to cut his way through the wilderness and had still been winter when he came back bearing the courteously defiant refusal of the French to give up their plans to hold those western lands.

Quite naturally, Governor Dinwiddie had not liked that message. Neither, apparently, had George Washington, for when the Governor replied to the French commander by sending a body of Virginia militia to drive the trespassers out, the young man had gone along in the advance guard. For about two years he had been getting ready—studying and drilling with Virginia troops—for just some such need as that. What was more, he had done so well, that he had been given command of one of the districts into which the colony had been divided for better protection.

But if ever a man came near to losing all chance for further promotion, George Washington did in that first expedition. Just why he did what he did, nobody has ever been able to explain, when he selected the place for his fort where he was open to attack on three sides. To be sure he had—even from that exposed position—surprised a French advance of thirty men, killed ten of them—among them the very officer who had sent the defiant message back to Governor Dinwiddie—and taken the rest prisoners. But, immediately, the whole French force, seven hundred

of them, had descended in merciless swiftness on that defenseless fort and although the small garrison put up a stiff nine-hour fight, George Washington had been compelled to surrender.

Of course, that was a disastrous beginning for any military career. But, right then, George Washington was able to do what he so often did in the long years that followed—and that was to turn defeat into near victory. Always dignified, always courteous, time and again he twisted disaster into something of honor. And so it had been in that first campaign; for the French allowed him to retreat with all the honors of war. In addition, when he finally appeared before the House of Burgesses to tell his full story, that body had not only given him a vote of thanks but with that vote the title of colonel. Shortly after, however, when the English government had ordered all colonial officers to serve as subordinate to the King's officers, George Washington, despite the honors given him, had resigned from the militia and had gone riding back to Mt. Vernon.

He had not been allowed to stay there many months, however, before General Braddock arrived to lead another campaign against the French and to ask the young man at Mt. Vernon to be his aide with a courtesy title of colonel. Washington had accepted; had caught a fever while riding through the wilderness in the heat of summer; had, while in the grip of that fever, fought like a young madman, only to see General Braddock wounded to death, to yield the defeat of his troops, and then again to ride back to Virginia, to be loaded once more with gratitude and made commander-in-chief of all that colony's troops.

Since those troops were made up of seven hundred untrained men scattered along four hundred miles of

wilderness frontier, Washington's new command had brought not only glory, but unbelievable hardships. As a result he again became ill, and was ordered home to Mt. Vernon. There he had rested and grown strong so that by the next year he was to ride forth once more at the head of the advance guard to try his strength against the French in the West. That had been his third and last ride into the West, for that campaign ended in a victory which pulled down the French flag from Fort Duquesne and changed its name to Fort Pitt.

He was twenty-six when he saw the British flag hoisted above that fort. After that he had been free to return again to Mt. Vernon. Just the year following he had married Martha Custis, a young widow with two children, and settled down to the life he loved best—the life of a Virginia gentleman. That life meant care of large estates, meant a warm-hearted delightful hospitality to neighbors and friends, meant assuming the responsibility of representing his district in the Virginia House of Burgesses just as all of the Washington men had assumed it before him. Since he had taken that responsibility deeply to heart, and because the duties were new to him, he had done as always, got ready by studying hard. Gradually, as he served term after term, not talking much, but quietly directing and advising, he had become recognized as one of Virginia's ablest political leaders. That fame, joined to that of his military campaigns against the French, had spread not only through all of Virginia, but out through all of the other British-American colonies. And the other colonies had listened, for there was a growing need of leadership during those years—years when the American colonies were finding increasing trouble, under the rule of England's king—to grow as they felt they should grow. George Washington had looked out from the

quiet of Mt. Vernon and had seen that trouble grow steadily. He had hoped against hope that a break with the land of his fathers might be avoided. But as the months passed, he had given up that hope. That was why, when the Boston Port Bill came bringing its trail of suffering, he had risen in the first provincial convention at Williamsburg, August 1, 1774, and said:

> "I will raise 1,000 men, subsist them at my own expense, and march at their head for relief of Boston."

Quite naturally, after that, with his years of service back of him, Virginia had chosen him to represent the colony in the First Continental Congress. Right then and there, George Washington had stopped being just a Virginian and had become an American. What was even more to the point, he had, very shortly afterward, become a leading American. Of course, then, when the Second Continental Congress had met in Philadelphia, in June, 1775, with the news of Lexington and Concord still stirring the blood of the members to white heat, with the British troops occupying Boston, with the picture of that handful of untrained, unequipped New England men gathered outside ready to match themselves against the world-famous British regulars, George Washington was the choice of that Congress to lead an army north to the rescue.

He had not accepted the choice very easily. When he had, however, and with it the title of Commander-in-Chief of the colonial army, he immediately announced that he would accept no pay for his services and that his expenses need not be met until after the war. It was evident right then that he had no thought, ever, that that war could end other but victoriously for the raw, ragged,

undisciplined colonial troops. Before he had time even to reach Cambridge where he had taken command of his men, his faith had been made still more strong by news of Bunker Hill.

In the first year of his command he had drilled his men—men from the fields, from the shops, from high public places—into an army that had brought cannon down from Ticonderoga, had set them up on Dorchester Heights, and early the next March had driven the British out of Boston. Then, without waiting for breath, he had marched south, established himself with nine thousand men in a weak position on Brooklyn Heights, where, while the British fleet in the harbor threatened New York City, General Howe with over twice the number of men had fallen upon him. And the story might have ended right there with a complete destruction of the colonial army if Washington's whole force had not taken advantage of a heavy fog to cross over to Manhattan in ferry boats. Driven from there up to White Plains, from White Plains down into New Jersey, the Commander-in-Chief had seen his small army grow steadily less. Then, just as everybody thought that he would have to give up, he had crossed the Delaware and swooped down on the Hessians' gay Christmas revelry, to capture a thousand prisoners together with a store of supplies that had put heart into every colonial soldier.

That thrilling victory made a Christmas for America to remember forever and a day. The news of it had brought Cornwallis hurrying to Trenton, where, after a short flurry of fighting he had seemed to think he could take his time before finishing the Americans. While he was taking it, Washington had crossed over on the frozen river, once more surprised the enemy in the early dawn, put them completely to rout, seized their supplies, and had been off

to a safe position at Morristown before the British general had finished rubbing his eyes.

Those victories had stiffened the backbone of the whole American army. But they also had brought General Howe down from New York with eighteen thousand men to defeat Washington's eleven thousand at Brandywine. Following that it had been easy for the British to march into Philadelphia while the American Congress fled. That discouraging summer had been followed by the bitter Valley Forge winter, when, while trying to keep his half-starved, half-frozen men from disbanding from under him, he had also had to fight plots among his own officers to drive him from his position as commander-in-chief. Without losing his faith in the cause for which he was fighting, without losing faith even in his own men, Washington traced those plots back to their source and nipped them right there.

Did the man now riding back to Mt. Vernon, spend much time remembering those miserable days? Or did his mind leap on to the time when the French came over to help the disheartened American army? Of course there had been months of maneuvering after that glad day before he closed in on General Cornwallis from the rear at Yorktown while the French fleet had approached along shore. Then had come the very hour when he had received in surrender the sword of that British general. That hour should have ended the war, but there had been more months—long weary ones —before the English had at last marched out of New York and left him free to go home.

Of course, George Washington had always been sure that they would march out—not only from New York but from the whole country. Even so, now that all fighting was done, now that the new flag of America flew over the whole land, there must have come even to him a different

attitude toward that land. For now toward not only the valley through which he was then riding—the valley of his father's home, of the whole Washington family in fact—but toward the land beyond, the land making all of the young states north and south, George Washington must have had a certain feeling of possession. And, as always, with the Washingtons, possessions meant serious responsibility. Something of all this must have been in the mind of the man riding home that December day—something even when he caught the first glimpse of Mt. Vernon rearing its broad chimneys and white clapboarded walls to welcome him home in the grey twilight of Christmas Eve.

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And just as he could not help that feeling of responsibility, neither could he help doing something about it. There lay the young country—a new nation—stretching back from the Atlantic seacoast into the wilderness, connected, so far as travel was concerned, only by narrow trails, or post roads, almost impassable during parts of the year. Still, over those difficult roads men had traveled to their first coming together against England's acts of oppression. And as they talked, planned, and met almost unbelievable difficulties, every one of those men had kept his own faith in the outcome.

Because of that faith the Articles of Confederation had been drawn up and ratified as early as 1777. Nobody, however, regarded those articles as covering all that should be covered when the new nation once had finished the war and had time to think out a constitution worthy of its future growth. So, now, even while seeing that the fields of Mt. Vernon yielded full crops, even while entertaining his friends who came in great numbers to visit

him, George Washington was busy writing, talking, urging that that constitution be made before the states grew so strong in their own rights that they would hesitate to come together under any central government.

With all of his work, it was two years before any group met to discuss common interests. Even then, that group assembled only to adjust certain conflicting opinions over the trade rights on the Potomac. Which meant that the delegates were from Virginia and Maryland alone. However, the meeting, called in Annapolis, adjourned to Mt. Vernon and out of it grew a desire to have one where all of the states would be represented. Virginia proposed such a meeting for the following year. Only five representatives appeared there, but those five took matters into their own hands and called a convention at Philadelphia for the next year, 1787.

That convention was just what George Washington had been wanting and working to get. Since he was the best known, the most trusted man there, he was naturally chosen to preside. With the shrewdly wise Benjamin Franklin present every second to help him to smooth out differences, to give inspiring suggestions, the convention swung along pretty much as he meant that it should. Those two really talked very little of what they had done for America, but when either one recommended a measure, the convention knew that that measure was based on loyalty—yes—but also on good common sense growing out of practical experience. In turn, those two recognized that the states had each sent its most trusted leaders to debate on the future. If ever those states were to be brought together—right then was the time.

So Washington saw that the members came together every day of that summer of 1787 from May 25 until

September 17. What is more, he saw that they all worked—worked out their own problems toward a general but common good. And the Constitution of the United States was the result. With that end reached, the convention, with its long hours of bitter discussions, with its jealousies, with its never-failing patriotism, adjourned, and George Washington, its chairman, rode off once more to Mt. Vernon to rest.

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But that Constitution provided for a president of the United States. Just as no other man had been considered as wise enough, experienced enough to lead the American army to victory; just as no other man had been considered wise enough or experienced enough to preside over the convention which drew up the form of government best suited for the future growth of America; so now no other man was seriously considered as fitted to be the first president of the new nation.

And what did George Washington think? Having come so far, how could he refuse to go on to the end? Every one of the thirteen states said emphatically that it would accept no refusal from him. He was the one man needed. What could he do but turn his back on the peace of Mt. Vernon and ride out to take his place as the first president of the United States? At the same time, John Adams, stern New England John Adams, rode down from Massachusetts to take his place beside the Virginian, as vice-president, second choice of the nation.

Washington took the oath of office, April 30, 1789, on Wall Street, New York, only a few steps from where he had said good-by to his officers six years before. No one who heard his voice ring out in his inaugural address that day

could doubt that he felt keenly—that he measured well—the responsibilities ahead of him; but no man could have taken those responsibilities better able to act freely; no one could have taken them more universally trusted by a whole people.

No man ever needed the help of all of his people more than he. Everything was waiting to be done at once. And before any one thing could be done, the machinery of the new constitution had to be set up. Immediately, Washington, not a party man himself, showed his tact in managing men by choosing his heads of departments equally from the two parties which had sprung up in the long months of producing the Constitution. Alexander Hamilton, leader of the Federalists and believing in a strong central government by a small group, was balanced by Thomas Jefferson, leader of the Anti-Federalists, later called Republicans, believing in less power for the central government and more for the individual states and the people in general.

But, even before getting all of the wheels of government started, the President had had presented to him for signing, the first tariff bill, which, like all the numberless ones that have followed in never ending party issues, had been the subject of prolonged and heated discussion in the House of Representatives. Of course, in those first days, however, any subject having to do with money for the new government had to be handled with fair swiftness and wisdom. An income had to be established, a debt of about $54,000,000 had to be paid, $11,000,000 of it to foreign countries, the remainder to the citizens of the United States. How could a new country, still war weary, with industries not yet under way, with farming undeveloped and markets widely scattered along almost impassable roads—how could it meet such debts? How could it get on its feet financially?

Those questions would have been hard enough to answer if everybody had worked together to answer them. Unfortunately, however, Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, bitterly opposed to each other along party lines, found plenty to disagree upon in financial issues. Since Hamilton was secretary of the treasury, it was his duty to submit a plan for furnishing that treasury with funds. His plan included the levying of an internal revenue tax and the establishment of a national bank. Jefferson fought the plan as one that gave the central government too much power over the states. Certain of the members of the President's cabinet believed with him; certain others with Hamilton. Washington, after hesitating and studying the whole question in his usually slow, thorough way, approved Hamilton's plan and lived to see his wisdom justified by the country's rapidly growing prosperity. Jefferson, at once, began welding his party into one of powerful opposition to all of Hamilton's policies—that was when the party first took the name of Republican.

The conflict over those matters at home was increased by sympathy for and against France and Great Britain in the war declared by France in 1793. Jefferson, who had been minister to Paris in the early years of the French Revolution, sympathized with the French. Hamilton hated the French republic as directly opposed to his ideas of government. Under the two leaders, feeling between the two parties grew to a white heat.

Certainly Washington was in a difficult place. Had not the French come to his help in the very darkest days of the Revolution? Could he turn his back on them now? Could he, especially, when the two countries had agreed to protect each other's possessions in America against Great Britain? Right in the midst of this tense situation,

a French agent, Citizen Genêt, landed in Charlestown and began to assemble troops, fit out ships, and then to march with flags flying up toward Philadelphia exactly as if he were on French soil. That was going too far; even for the French. Something had to be done and done quickly. Since the very life of the United States depended on her keeping out of any war right then, there was only one thing for President Washington to do and that was to keep them out by declaring that the United States government would take sides with neither country. He therefore made his declaration of neutrality.

No finer tribute to George Washington was ever paid than that paid to him right in the midst of the great excitement that followed. Party feeling was never more bitter. His first term was coming to a close. Jefferson could have turned against him with his whole strong party following the lead. Instead, forgetting all party feeling, in face of the fact that Washington through signing the National Bank Bill, through proclaiming neutrality, had, apparently, sided with his political enemy, Thomas Jefferson joined with Hamilton in begging George Washington to take the presidency for a second term.

What man could turn his back on such an expression of trust? George Washington, at any rate, was not the man to do so. So he entered another four years. Even though he now had to meet party bickerings, he knew better what the whole country wanted than any man under him. Not only had he kept close to the needs of each state through its representatives, but in the early months of his first administration he had made it his business to travel out among those states, to greet the people intimately, to talk with the state leaders, and to find out, at first hand, the needs of his land. Riding by stage coach over mud roads,

through miles of sparsely settled farm lands, was not an easy thing to do even to a man used as he was to privations of war. But he did it, just as he did everything else in his life—as a part of his responsibilities in bringing the far-flung states of his country to know each other—and their president—better.

Certainly, George Washington, beginning his second term, was in serious need of the understanding that acquaintance had brought him. War with France and Great Britain was still on. The bitterness still naturally rankling against Great Britain because of her earlier treatment of America, was now increased by her failure to meet certain treaty agreements and by her stopping American vessels on the high seas to seize British-born seamen and force them to fight on British men-of-war. At last embargoes were laid—despite their hindrance to trade—on shipping in American ports. The United States only waited for Washington to say the word, and war would have been on.

But Washington did not say the word. Instead, he asked John Jay, minister to Great Britain, to negotiate with that government for a new treaty. No more honorable, public-spirited man than John Jay could have undertaken the task. But when he announced the result, after long, anxiously difficult weeks, he brought down on his head a terrible storm of misunderstanding opposition. The most objectionable part of the treaty was that which gave American vessels of under seventy tons entry to the British West Indies, providing she—America—stopped all exporting of molasses, sugar, coffee, cocoa, or cotton to any other ports in the world. In addition, while the British agreed to evacuate the posts they were still occupying and to confer on the settlement of the northeastern boundary, they refused to yield to America her full rights on the sea. The best that can be said, even today, of the

treaty is that it postponed war for another round dozen years. But the outraged American people in 1795 did not stop to consider that. Instead, they heaped abuse on top of abuse on John Jay and President Washington.

In the meantime, settlements had extended on and on to the west until the trade from those settlements demanded a free passage of the Mississippi down to the Gulf of Mexico. While the United States commanded that freedom part way, the Spanish had the rights of trade at the mouth of the river, thus causing delay and expense in the transfer of United States products to ocean-going vessels. Washington, therefore, sent Thomas Pinckney to negotiate a treaty with Spain for a clear passage the full length of the stream. Pinckney was successful, and the western frontier immediately began to grow more prosperous.

The very fact that such a treaty was needed is a measure of how America was extending its power in those early years. The problems which had faced George Washington back in 1787, were now fairly well solved. Even the one of getting the people to pay taxes levied by the Federal government had been settled by putting down the Whiskey Rebellion. Everywhere within America's borders, life was growing easier. And even foreign powers were beginning to pay respect to the young, new nation.

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PERHAPS all of this was why George Washington felt that his work was completed. At any rate, he announced he would not be a candidate for a third term. That done he delivered his famous Farewell Address to his people, and rode off again down through Virginia toward home, leaving John Adams to meet what lay ahead. Did he feel satisfied with what lay back of him? Did he feel any uneasiness over the bitter outbreaks already occurring over

slavery? Did he sense that, as the years passed, the young government would add responsibilities? No doubt he did both think and feel all of that.

But he was now sixty-five. He had not had many seasons to do what he wanted to do at Mt. Vernon. He meant to have them now. And he had—for barely a short two years. Even in that brief time his quiet was threatened when it seemed as if France and America would go to war and as if George Washington would have to ride out again as commander-in-chief. But that trouble blew over and he hurried again to his farming, his generous hospitality, his many friends coming from all parts of the world to see and talk with him at Mt. Vernon.

Then, just when life seemed richest to him, the end came. On December 12, 1799, while riding several miles from home, he was caught in a heavy snow storm. The next day he developed laryngitis. Two days later he said to those about him:

> "I thank you for your attentions, but I cannot last long. I pray you, let me go off quietly."

Calling his secretary he put all of his affairs quietly in order as had been his lifelong custom. That done, he went to sleep.

When the news of his death reached England, all feeling of enmity vanished in memory of the kindly man who had made even surrender a gracious possibility for his foe. In France, those who had fought with him mourned as America's own soldiers mourned. And as the years pass—over a century and more of them—men and women from all over his own land, from all over the world, continue to pay never-ending tribute to the spot where he sleeps at Mt. Vernon.

II. JOHN ADAMS

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ANY man following George Washington as president was bound to have a difficult time. Not only had the whole country expected Washington to do the right and wise thing, but as a rule his experience and knowledge had led him to do what was expected. What was more, he had done it with tact and graciousness so as to keep the affection and respect even of those who opposed him. His successor had need, therefore, to be all that George Washington had been, and, even more, to meet the approval of America.

Now, John Adams, left by Washington to meet the next four years as president, had plenty of experience, plenty of knowledge; but, unfortunately, he lacked tact and graciousness, and so, right at the beginning, suffered.

Of course, John Adams could not help his stern nature any more than Washington could his more generous one. John Adams was a New Englander; George Washington a Virginian. That being so, they were as widely different as old Puritan and old Church of England stock could make them. But they were alike—unmistakably alike—in one quality, and that was their deep, unwavering loyalty to the welfare of young America.

The Adams family, like that of the Washingtons, had come over to the new land early in the seventeenth century. But, because they had chosen to settle with their Puritan brethren up along the Massachusetts Bay coast, they had not found life quite so easy as the Virginian family had. Landing with a few kitchen utensils, one silver spoon, and several precious old books, they had established their home in a three-room house set down on thin, rocky soil.

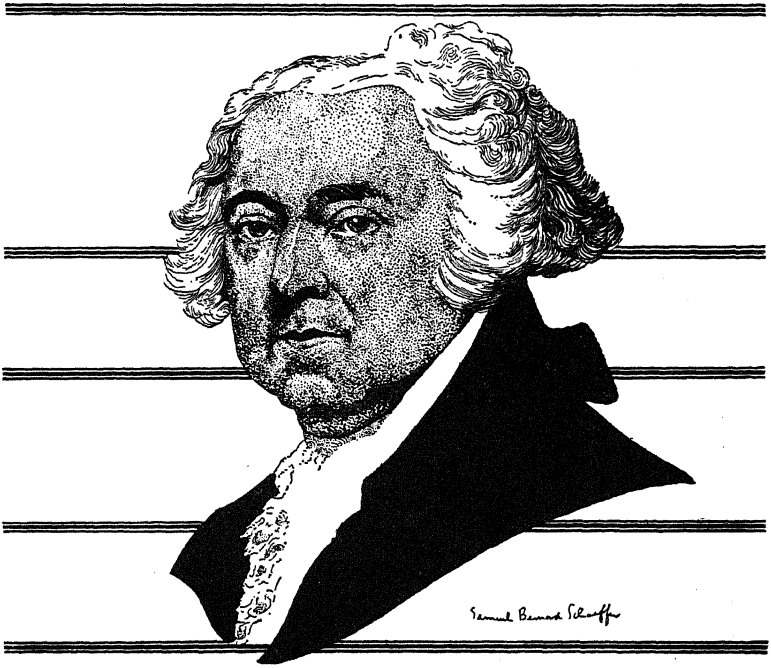
Although both lads grew up among people who reverenced England and her constitution, a constitution giving the right of representation wherever her flag flew, the town where John Adams was born, old Braintree, was even more alive to that right than the Virginia valley of George Washington's early life. Still further, no family in Braintree had a better understanding of what that right meant than the Adams family.

Perhaps because he was so keenly alive to his rights as a citizen, perhaps because the small fortune of six thousand dollars, accumulated in the new land, made education seem wise, John Adams' father decided to send his son to Harvard. John, therefore, took his full college course, and graduated when he was nineteen—just at the very time George Washington was trying his strength of young leadership out along the far western wilderness of Virginia's territory.

After finishing college, John Adams, like many another New England youth, studied law and was admitted to the bar. It was only a few years later that James Otis thundered forth his argument on England's violation of American rights, and that the young lawyer in writing his report of that argument, became convinced that Great Britain must respect those rights or lose her new colonies.

He must have convinced others that he was thinking straight, for in 1765, when the Stamp Act brought protest, John Adams was chosen to draw up the instructions sent by the town of Braintree to the Massachusetts legislature.

Those instructions were sufficiently sound to appeal not only to that legislature but to others as well and so directed the policies of other districts. In the meantime, John Adams had attacked the Stamp Act in an article published in the *Boston Gazette*. The attack was so forcibly and intelligently



John Adams.

written that it attracted British attention and was republished in a London paper. All of this activity not only brought young Adams before his own state in a very favorable light, but caused his fame to spread through the other colonies and even across the Atlantic to startle old England.

And, then, he did something curiously characteristic of him and his whole family: he defended, as a lawyer, the British soldiers arrested for taking part in the Boston Massacre. Quite naturally American colonists did not like that, and John Adams, then and there, felt the first blast of public disapproval. Nevertheless, he went straight ahead in face of that disapproval, clearly, logically presenting the case with the result that most of the British soldiers accused were freed from the accusations. By so doing he forced his fellow citizens to recognize that justice was due even an enemy. He, also, caused them to recognize that his ability was needed in the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

From that House, three years later, he was sent by Massachusetts to represent her in the first Continental Congress. She had reason to be proud of his record, not only in that congress but through succeeding years. His college and law background, plus his practical experience in the town meetings of Massachusetts, made him a most valuable man in that group laying the foundation for a new nation. Unlike George Washington, he was, from the very beginning, impatient to separate from Great Britain. He was not only impatient, he was sure that separation had to come. Because he saw all of that, he urged the Continental Congress to prepare for war. When, at last, the news of Lexington and Concord proved he was right and a motion was made to send Washington as commander-in-chief to take charge of the Colonial Army, he was on his feet

instantly to second the motion. And that was when he wrote his wife:

"Let us eat potatoes and drink water!"

thus urging that every sacrifice be made to help win the Revolution.

The next year, 1776, when Richard Henry Lee presented his famous resolution:

"That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be Free and Independent States."

no member of the whole Congress was more eloquent or forcible in urging its acceptance than John Adams. Of course, he was immediately put on a committee with Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Philip Livingston, and Roger Sherman to draft the Declaration of Independence. At the same time he served as head of the Board of War and Ordnance and as a member of several other important committees.

It was in the very midst of all this activity, on December 3, 1777, that he received word he was to go to France to serve on the American commission negotiating with the French for help against the British. But by the time Adams, in those days of slow travel, reached the French court, the treaty, except for certain details, was already settled. With his downright honesty, he was at a disadvantage with the cleverly wary diplomats he met. Naturally, he did not like them and very certainly they did not like his blunt attacks. As a result, America recalled him.

On his return home, he found his own state struggling to draw up a constitution and immediately began to help. Before he had gone far in that, he was asked by the Continental Congress to go back to Europe to work with John

Jay and Benjamin Franklin on a treaty of peace, which, it was hoped, would soon be needed to end the American Revolution.

Now, the instructions to the committee were that France was to be included in all plans and nothing concluded without her knowledge. Instead of following those instructions, Jay and Adams dealt directly with England, ignored France entirely, and outvoted Franklin at every turn. While their procedure was certainly very high-handed, everyone, later, decided the two had shown good common sense and real foresight.

In the meantime, before the work of the treaty was done, Adams had gone to The Hague to try to get the Netherlands to recognize the United States as an independent nation; to negotiate a treaty of friendship and trade with foreign countries; and, what was even of more importance, to secure a loan. He was successful in all three attempts.

Because of this record, John Adams, two years after the close of the American Revolution, was sent as minister to the Court of St. James. Again his abrupt honesty, his fearlessness, shown particularly at a time when England needed a tactful handling following her defeat in America, caused him to be quite generally disliked. That dislike was shared by his own countrymen shortly afterwards, when he wrote that "the rich, the able, the wellborn" should be given greater power in the Senate. In a nation just established by a declaration that "All men are created equal," such a statement from one who had helped make that declaration, created nothing short of an uproar.

Nevertheless, he went right along, after his return home, helping draw up the Constitution of the United States, ably meeting all attacks and generally holding up the hands of Washington who was sitting as chairman of the Constitu-

tional Convention. As a result, despite his lack of popularity, when, according to that Constitution, candidates were announced for president, the names of Washington and Adams headed the list. In compliance with the election rules of the time, the one of those two to receive the greater number of electoral votes, would become the first president of the United States; the other, the first vice-president.

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AND so, because he received the second largest number of votes, John Adams became vice-president to serve with Washington throughout the first two administrations. He had never stood second to anyone before in his active life. Of course he was not happy in the position. But he was deeply devoted to the success of the new nation; he was deeply interested in seeing the Constitution set safely to running; and he was sensible enough to know that a man with his knowledge of constitutional law would be very necessary through those first years in starting the new government running safely.

No doubt he did his part well in those first eight years with Washington. Even when most disagreeable, he was quite likely to be entirely right in what he aimed to do. Of course, he constantly offended those with whom he had worked—leaders of his own Federalist party, as well as those of the opposing one—the Republicans. Nevertheless, he held the respect of the common people throughout the country; held it regardless of his well-known belief that those people were not fitted to have a part in the central government.

Because he did command that respect, when George Washington refused a third term as president, it was Adams

who was first choice for the place. Thomas Jefferson was second. And so, the Adams administration started off very differently from that of Washington; for instead of having everyone with him, as Washington had had, John Adams' own vice-president was the leader of the opposing political party. To add to that handicap, Adams had long before fallen out with Alexander Hamilton, leader of his own, the Federalist party. What could he hope to accomplish against such odds?

If he had had only that home tangle to straighten out, his hands would have been quite full enough. But, added to that, he was faced by anger in France over America's failure to side with that country in the war the French and British were waging. Scarcely was he seated in the presidential chair when news came that the American minister had been asked to leave Paris.

Such an act on the part of France was quite enough to call for a declaration of war from America. John Adams, however, cared more for the uninterrupted growth of his young country than he did for any such exhibition of national pride. So he sent a commission to Paris to try to establish the old friendly relations there. The members of that commission were met with dispatches—signed X, Y, and Z—demanding money as a price of receiving the commission. Of course, the members refused. Immediately, they were ordered to leave France.

In those days of slow travel, it took five months for the news of all this to reach America. But when it did, John Adams rose in all of his might and said to Congress:

> "I shall never send another minister to France without assurance that he will be received, respected, and honored as a representative of a great, free, powerful, and independent nation."

Of course, feeling ran bitterly high against France. And that was when George Washington, living his quiet life down at Mt. Vernon, was asked again to be commander-in-chief of the American army; this time in a war against France.

It was also the time when work was pushed vigorously on building the new navy; taxes rose in proportion. And still further, it was the time when the famous Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 were passed by Congress, whereby immigration was cut off for a number of years; difficulties were put in the way of all foreigners wanting to become American citizens; and suspicion was directed against all citizens of enemy countries living within the borders of the United States.

The Republicans in Congress fought these acts as opposed to the ideals for which the American Revolution had been fought, and, even after they became laws, separate states passed resolutions against them. In those resolutions appeared, for the first time, a clearly thought out, forcible expression of the rights of states to act independently of the Federal government. That expression was later to grow in strength and to bring tragedy to the Union.

So far as can be judged to-day, John Adams was not at any time as much concerned with the Alien or Sedition Acts, or the resolutions concerning state rights, as he was with avoiding war with France. Therefore, when France, embarrassed over the contents of the X, Y, and Z papers, sent a message to the United States, promising to receive an American envoy "as the representative of a great, free, powerful, and independent nation," he immediately seized his chance to reestablish friendly relations. What was more, he did not so much as consult his own cabinet before he presented to Congress the names of men he thought wise to form a new commission to France.

And, despite a storm of disapproval, that commission went to France, was received as Adams had hoped it would be, and negotiated a treaty, which, on the whole, was satisfactory both to America and to France. War—a most disastrous war—had been averted, and John Adams largely deserved the credit for averting it.

But, in accomplishing that for America, he had completely offended his own party, the Federalists. He had, at the same time, given the Republicans plenty of ammunition to use against him in the coming election. In the face of all this, however, he still held his high place with the American people who knew him for a mercilessly fearless and honest man who was doing his best to serve America—just as he had done that best throughout more than a score of years before. So, in spite of the opposition of party leaders, he was again chosen the Federalist candidate for president.

And was defeated—defeated largely because of intrigue against him within his own party. But that party paid the price of their disloyalty when the Republicans, taking advantage of the Federalist split, elected Thomas Jefferson president. To offset his defeat, John Adams backed by Congress, proceeded to fill newly created positions, as well as vacancies, in government employ, from Federalist ranks. That done, he departed—departed early on the morning of March 4, 1801, without so much as waiting to hear Thomas Jefferson take the oath as third president of the United States.

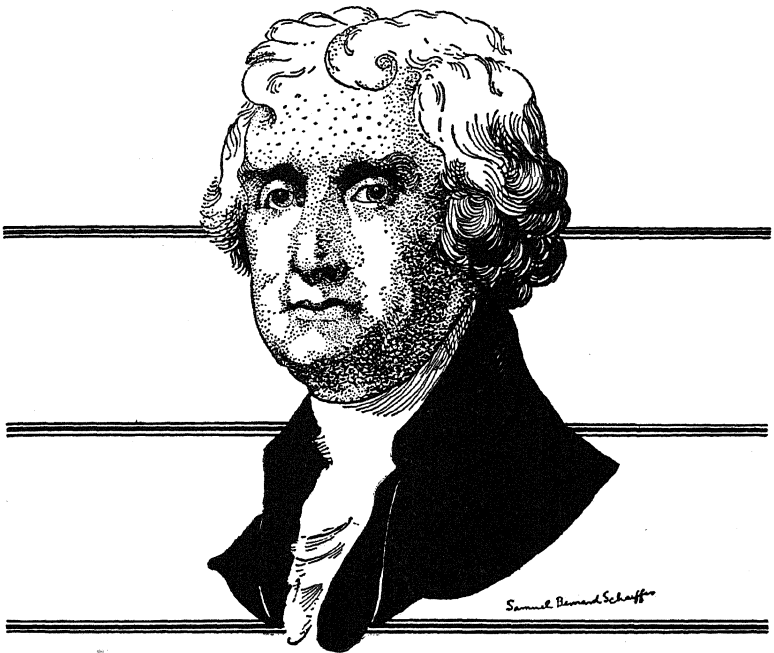
He, like Washington, now went back to his home, a home in Quincy, Massachusetts. There he lived, more or less quietly, for twenty-five years. As those years passed, he must have taken real satisfaction in seeing the nation which he, standing shoulder to shoulder with George Washington, had so earnestly and laboriously tried to start on its way

on towards the goal he had seen, and still saw shining, so clearly far down in the future.

Perhaps he had always caught this vision a little more clearly than George Washington or John Adams—the radiant vision of a land where men were born with an equal chance to work, to live, to be happy. If he did see all that more vividly, it was partly, no doubt, because he belonged to the land of the Blue Ridge frontier rather than that of George Washington or of the thrifty Adams family up in New England. Men breathed a more vigorous air, lived a harder life in Albemarle County, Virginia, than they did in the older settlements to the east. Out in that rougher frontier life to the west, money was not half so much needed as strong, reliable, resourceful people. What a man's family was, meant next to nothing providing that man himself measured up to the demands of life—measured honestly, fearlessly, generously. If a man did that, his neighbor respected and honored him.

And Thomas Jefferson was born among those men. Peter Jefferson, his own father, belonged to one of those staunch country families. As a civil engineer, he was known far and wide for his satisfactory settling of boundary lines. As a citizen he must have stood high for he was elected justice of the peace, colonel of the county militia, and representative in the Virginia House of Burgesses. As a man, he must have been attractive in manners, fine in his personality, since he married one of the Virginia Randolphs—an old, old family very highly respected for its social standing, even in those rough days of the wilderness.

It was from this home that Thomas went to the College of William and Mary to study Latin, Greek, French, mathematics, and a little science. And to like it all. Because



Th: Jefferson

he did like to work, he managed his days so well that he not only stood high in his regular class work, but also became an excellent violinist, took part as a brilliant talker in different college groups, and added to his wide popularity by singing well, dancing well, and sharing in all out-of-door sports—particularly those demanding a knowledge and love of thoroughbred horses.

When Thomas left college at twenty, he began to study law as many another young American did in those days. But instead of skimming through the course in a few weeks —or months at the most—as some of his friends did, he studied hard for five years before he was admitted to the bar. As a result of this careful preparation, he soon built up one of the best practices in Virginia. But because he was more interested in helping to make good laws than he was in defending poor ones, he soon turned his attention to the political field where he could have a part in making them.

Fortunately his father had left him an estate of nineteen hundred acres, which, by the time he was thirty, he had increased to five thousand. When he married Martha Wayles, a lovely, accomplished young widow, her father added enough land to what Jefferson already had to bring the young people an income suited to their needs. Those needs, of course, included a home equal to that of other hospitable, social Virginians. In all of his long life of public service, Thomas Jefferson—like Washington—never failed to think of that home with longing; never failed to go back to it with deep joy.

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But the very income that made his home beautiful also made it possible for Thomas Jefferson to give more time to politics. Like his father, he began his career as justice of the

peace, and, like him also, became later a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses. He stayed in that assembly for six successive years, 1769 to 1775, a strong member, who hated debates, worked promptly, actively on committees, and soon attracted attention by his forcible, simple manner of writing.

This last accomplishment was what brought him, first, not only national, but international fame. As it happened, he was ill at home when the first convention was called, in 1774, to discuss Great Britain's treatment of America. Now, Thomas Jefferson had very decided opinions concerning that matter, so, sick abed as he was, he set those opinions down in a paper he called "A Summary of the Rights of America."

The paper wasted no words in saying what those rights were. As a result it was published in America exactly as it was written, and then in England with some changes, to make it, perhaps, a little more acceptable to British eyes. Immediately, as rapidly as men of the Old and the New Worlds read the "Summary," Jefferson reared high as a leader whom England had cause to fear and America cause to rejoice in.

Further, that summary led, in the next year, to Virginia's selecting Thomas Jefferson to represent her in the Continental Congress. There he was chosen to draw up the answer to Lord North's plan to make peace with the American colonies. As everybody knows, not only that plan but every other one following failed to make peace. No doubt many men of that time knew that a break with England was bound to come. And, certainly, no one among them knew that earlier than Thomas Jefferson; not only knew it but planned what to do when the crisis finally came. And so he must have been quite naturally chosen to draw

up the American Declaration of Independence. How he must have gloried in the trust given him. Back of him lay those long-ago days of his boyhood when he had seen men along the frontier win out through natural ability just because the opportunity to work and be happy was equally open to all. Back of him, also, lay his years of study, giving him a vision that reached out beyond the frontier—out even beyond the Atlantic coast and over to the Old World lying beyond. And more than all that, there lay behind him his years of mingling with the men who were giving the best there was in them to forming plans for America's welfare. Is it any wonder then that he should begin by declaring that all men have "certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness"? Is it any wonder that he should conclude reverently:

> "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor."

And having done that, he straightway refused reelection to the Continental Congress; refused, also, to join Benjamin Franklin and Silas Dean on a mission to France; and went back to Virginia, in order to work on reforming the laws of his own state. How could he do otherwise? The laws certainly needed reforming if they were to meet the ideals set forth in the Declaration. For example, there was the one that provided for the passing on of a large portion of family property to the eldest son. Such a law worked against an equal distribution of wealth—which, in time worked against equal opportunities to achieve "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." Also, among those

laws were others limiting freedom of worship and compelling the people of Virginia to pay taxes toward the support of the established Church—the Church of England.

Both of these laws were finally changed to his satisfaction. But when he tried to get the state to free its slaves, he failed. He did, however, manage to get a bill passed forbidding any future importation of them. Also, he turned public opinion toward better treatment of criminals, even if he did not succeed in abolishing certain punishment which he desired to abolish. Another bill very dear to his heart was one providing that every child, rich or poor, should have an equal chance for an education. That bill also failed, failed because there was no middle class to support it and the rich planters were not interested in it. But, again, Jefferson was fairly successful since he roused his public to think of free education as one of the things necessary to keep faith with the ideals set forth by him and those who were working with him.

He kept steadily following these lines for three years. In the meantime, the Revolution had reached its most discouraging stage, particularly in the South. It was then, in 1779, that Jefferson found himself elected governor of Virginia. He was now in a position to execute some of the laws he had helped to form. He served his first term and was reelected. But during his second term he became unpopular because he failed, for some reason, to protect Virginia against British troops who were then running wild over the state. When, therefore, his name was brought up for a third term, he refused reelection.

But he did not refuse to return to Congress. That is why we find him there at the close of the Revolution as chairman of the committee to draw up terms of peace with Great Britain. Later, after that peace was concluded and

the new government found itself very rich in possibilities, but with scarcely a copper it could call its own to develop those possibilities, he reported the plan for our present monetary system. In the very same session, he also reported a plan for governing the new territories opening out beyond the Appalachian Mountains, and about the same time succeeded in getting Virginia to turn her possessions northwest of the Ohio River over to the Federal government.

Right then and there, he stood up head and shoulders above those about him; stood up to lift his eyes from the Atlantic coast and gaze out toward the west with some appreciation of what it promised for America when she was ready to claim that promise. What is more, he saw far enough ahead, Virginian though he was, to include in his recommendations for governing the new western settlement, a clause prohibiting slavery in them.

In the midst of these new dreams of extending America's resources westward, he was asked to turn his back on them and to go over to France to help Benjamin Franklin and John Adams negotiate certain commercial treaties with European governments. He decided to go. As a result he not only helped get commercial benefits for the United States, but, later, took Franklin's place as minister to France and did much in his four years in that position to make all Europe understand and respect America.

In addition, he saw the French in the midst of their Revolution—saw them struggling to gain the equality and liberty he had all his life considered the right of all people. All of his understanding and sympathy went out to them. So much so, that, when he came home in 1789, he fully expected to go back and do what he could for the French. But George Washington, as first president, was just taking on the responsibility of guiding the new American republic.

Who had the power to see more clearly than Thomas Jefferson what lay ahead to be done? No one, in Washington's mind. Neither was there any one he knew who could more surely put into practical action what he knew than Thomas Jefferson could. So he asked Jefferson to be the first secretary of state. And Jefferson, reluctantly giving up his own desire to go back and help France, accepted.

Immediately he was plunged into all sorts of difficulties. Chief among which was his inability to get along with Alexander Hamilton whom, as will be remembered, Washington had made secretary of the United States treasury. No two men could have been more different than Jefferson and Hamilton were—Hamilton, every inch an aristocrat, chief of the Federalist Party, calling for a strong central government headed by rich and well-educated men to the exclusion of those less fortunate; Jefferson, fearlessly democratic, leading what was then called the Republican Party which wanted to give every state its own right to say how the government should be run.

To make matters worse, in the struggle then going on between England and France, Hamilton favored the English, while Jefferson was heart and soul with the French. Washington, as we know, stood between the two men, trying to be fair to both, trying to keep America free from foreign entanglement. As time passed, however, Jefferson began to feel that Washington preferred Hamilton's judgment to his. That, on top of the need to look after his own affairs, finally led him to resign from the cabinet. So far as his financial situation was concerned, he did not resign a second too soon. While in France he had been forced to spend his own money. At the same time, he had not been able to develop his property at home. So now, as he turned his back on public affairs, he must have welcomed the

chance to go home to Monticello and catch up with his private demands. And he stayed there for three years, experimenting in farming, building up his run-down estate, and being simply, completely happy among his own kin and neighbors.

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But Thomas Jefferson was the leading man of his political party. What is more, that party knew it only too well. Of course its leaders were not going to allow him to go on living the life of a country gentleman. And so, in 1796, he left the quiet, spacious, lovely house at Monticello for the strenuous presidential campaign of that year. Of course, also, he headed the Republican ticket and, as we already know, headed it in opposition to his old friend, John Adams, who had so brilliantly championed his—Jefferson's—draft of the Declaration of Independence. The fight was a good one. In the end, Adams, leading in the number of votes received, became President; Jefferson coming in second, became, according to the custom, vice-president. And once more the two joined forces to make their earlier plans develop.

Jefferson soon found his chief activity in helping to adjust trouble with France. War with that country was now actually threatened. American sympathy with the French in their efforts to gain greater liberty added to the seriousness of the situation. At last President Adams, as will be remembered, had to curb that sympathy and the Alien Laws were passed whereby all foreign immigration was restricted. At the same time the Sedition Laws went through, restricting freedom in speech and press.

Quite naturally, Jefferson, with his ideals of freedom, objected to both of these. What is more, he knew that

others objected also; others who had no chance under the existing strong central power to express themselves. To give them that chance, he helped draft the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions voicing opposition to the objectionable laws. Those resolutions were accepted by the state legislatures of Virginia and Kentucky, but were fiercely denounced in the North.

The bitterness increased on into the next presidential campaign when Jefferson ran for president against Aaron Burr. That bitterness reached its peak when the two leaders tied, each with seventy-three electoral votes. Congress was left to decide which should be president. Angered at the possibility of losing their power, the Federalists put forth every effort to elect Burr. But after thirty-six ballots were cast, Jefferson undeniably won.

Fortunately, Thomas Jefferson knew that in spite of this bitter opposition by Federalist leaders, the country at large really wanted him to be president. Perhaps, as one response to that country's faith, he immediately set about to express the democracy he had always claimed as the ideal of American life and government. To start with, he announced there would be no splendor of silks and satins, no coaches and fours at his inauguration. Instead, dressed in simple, plain black, he walked to the Capitol to take the oath of president. With his tall, raw-boned figure, with his ruddy, sandy complexion, with all of his love of music, of color, and vigorous action, he might easily have made a dramatic event of the day, particularly so as his inauguration was the first to take place in the nation's new Capitol at Washington.

But Thomas Jefferson wanted no misunderstanding about his democracy. He meant there should be none, either on that day or on any that followed through to the last of

his eight years as president. And just as he stripped his own office of all unnecessary ceremony, all wasting of time, all extra expense, he likewise saw to it that every government department followed his example.

And then, having set up that standard of economy at Washington, he stood up and with a magnificant sweep startled the land with his action. Off went a fleet down to Tripoli and Tripoli decided to treat American demands with prompt deference. Off went James Monroe, his old friend, to help Robert Livingston, American minister to France, negotiate with Napoleon for the purchase of a strip of the Gulf coast, extending east from the Mississippi and including New Orleans. And, when, cornered by Napoleon, the two representatives bought—in place of that strip—the whole of the stretch known as Louisiana for $15,000,000, Jefferson, no matter how appalled he may have been, stood back of the purchase like a stone wall. Not only stood back of it, but sent the Lewis and Clark Expedition out to report on the riches of the new territory and so to justify him and his friends in the eyes of his people. Now, at last, he claimed, the new republic so long cramped along the sea coast, so long bickering for water rights along the Mississippi, could stretch out and begin to grow as it was meant to grow.

Of course, when the end of his first term came, Thomas Jefferson was reelected. Now those were the years of Aaron Burr's conspiracy and feeling ran high on the matter. Jefferson tried to ignore all of the rumors about his political rival; but at last when he could do so no longer, he ordered Burr's capture and trial. While this was an unpleasant duty, the public, generally speaking, was with him. Two other movements of his second administration could not boast of such support; although they were

carried through. One of these had to do with Jefferson's Indian policy which included taking away the Red Man's land rights east of the Mississippi and forcing him to strike his long trail to the west.

The other very unpopular move of this second four years was the result of Great Britain's efforts to gain indirect benefits from America's sea trade. The most objectionable of these was the attempt to seize American seamen and press them into English service. Matters went from bad to worse. At last the British ship, *Leopard*, fired upon the American *Chesapeake* and captured three American citizens. Jefferson retaliated by an Embargo Act, which, while working loss on foreign trade, worked even greater financial loss on the young American industries rapidly growing up along the Atlantic seaports.

Right in the midst of the outburst following this act, Jefferson's second term came to an end. Tired of political friction, he refused to run again and departed for Monticello. This time to stay; to stay and to live his own private life as he wanted to live it. But to do that Jefferson needed money. Now, the salary of the president of the United States in those days was far below what was necessary to meet demands of the position. Thomas Jefferson certainly lived simply and yet he had to spend his own money if he met all that he should meet. Before those years in Washington were his others in public life, others of travel and living abroad without proper income from his government to meet such expense. In addition, because of those years of absence from home, he had not been able to look after his own plantation. As a result, he found himself back at Monticello without money and facing a debt of $20,000.

Even with that handicap, he not only went ahead trying to improve his run-down estate, but, at the same time,

developing his plans for the University of Virginia. Those plans were so far-reaching and yet so practical, that even though they had to wait long years for developing, they were widely influential with all educational leaders. One wishes that he might have lived to see his dream come true for that University. But his financial affairs went from bad to worse until seven years after he returned home, he was forced to sell his large and valuable library to Congress. After that, the public, his public whom he had served so powerfully—raised $16,500 and turned it over to him to relieve the anxiety of his last years.

Those years came to an end July 4, 1826, exactly half a century to the very day following that signing of the Declaration of Independence. Did he fully grasp how he had kept faith with the ideals he had set forth in that famous paper? Of course he had made his mistakes but never once had he failed to put first his belief that every man should have equal opportunity with every other man; never once had he failed to emphasize the right of every state to representation equal to every other state; never once had he forgotten that he himself came from a frontier beyond which lay still another frontier where men were measured by their own ability to serve their neighbor honestly, courageously, generously.

II. JAMES MADISON

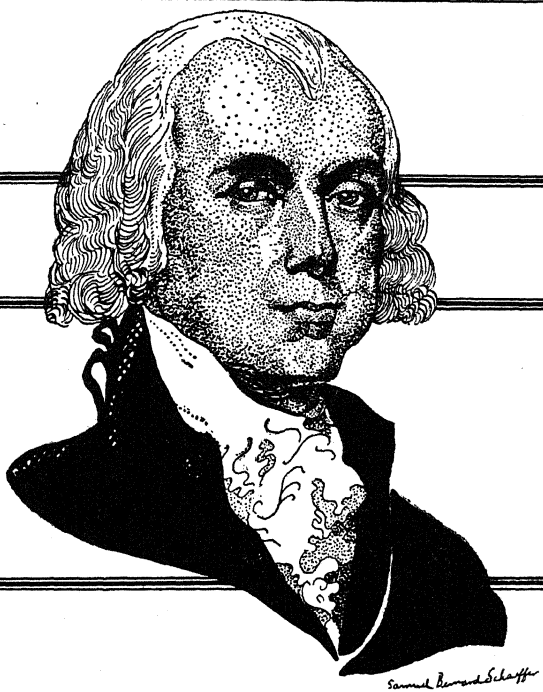
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No man ever needed friends more than Thomas Jefferson did. Always fearless, always active, he needed wise friends, loyal ones, who saw far ahead what Jefferson saw and were willing to follow him, work for him, until what they and he saw could also be seen by the whole country and made a part of that country's growth.

Among those friends was James Madison. Brilliant but quietly shy; fearless but wise in his fearlessness; from a Virginia family long settled among other old families near the head of Chesapeake Bay, James Madison possessed just the qualities needed to balance Thomas Jefferson's vigorously vital activity. And he gave what he possessed to his friend freely, continuously, for years. Thomas Jefferson, with his rare power for measuring men, not only took what Madison gave but paid him back by trusting him as few men ever are trusted.

That friendship lasted through all of the give and take of public service together, never losing an atom of fineness during the eight years Madison served as President Jefferson's secretary of state; never swerving in its loyalty when Madison took the president's chair to carry out the policies Jefferson had established.

No two boyhoods could have been more different than those of Jefferson and Madison. To be sure both were Virginians. Both were descendants of staunch old Englishmen who had come over to the New World back in the sixteen hundreds. Both grew up on a plantation where life was pleasant. But where the Madisons had stopped and stayed, as so many did, close to the Atlantic coast, the Jeffersons had moved farther west where life demanded a



James Madison

defense, where a sturdier strength, a more vigorous independence was needed than in the sheltered valley of the Madison country.

Quite naturally, Thomas Jefferson grew up to be much more sure of himself than James Madison could ever be. Besides, he was eight years older than James, which meant that when he was a recognized leader at William and Mary, James was only a small, rather frail boy back in King George county. Even then, however, he was rather a responsible one in his position as the oldest of a dozen brothers and sisters in the Madison household.

One wonders when he first discovered Thomas Jefferson —discovered him in his own mind and took him on then and there, quietly but none the less emphatically, to be his friend. That could have happened, and probably did, long before the two ever began working together. It might have happened even before Thomas so much as realized that James was there just waiting to find where he best fitted in to the older boy's vigorous life. For James Madison was that sort. He was made to serve even while knowing equally well how to lead. Perhaps that is why he first decided he would be a minister and so studied toward that end through his whole college life.

Perhaps, also, it was that very college, the College of New Jersey, which had much to do with his changing his mind about his profession. For that college—now Princeton University—differed from those generally attended by Virginian boys down in their own state, where they met and knew only their own kind. On the other hand, up in the New Jersey college, a boy met and mingled with others from each of the thirteen different colonies. In those days of slow travel, few letters, and fewer printed pages, no one living on at home in his own part of the country could

know what life was like, what people needed in other sections. But the Virginia boy from the Virginia plantation going to the New Jersey College suddenly found himself facing one of his own age from the fishing coast of New England, another from among the prosperous Dutch of New York, another of quiet Quaker reserve from Philadelphia.

And they all talked. Some loudly and vividly; some—James Madison among them—more quietly and, perhaps, somewhat more wisely. Times were exciting. The Stamp Act had been passed and repealed. Other acts of oppression had followed. Every day, the colonists, whether from along Boston Bay, or along the Potomac, were growing stronger to resist English rule. And every day, the boys at the College of New Jersey, said their say, to a finish, concerning what should be done and how.

James Madison was one among them at first, and then, just how or why, nobody ever quite knew, he was out ahead, leading his own particular club. That club was called the American Whig Society. No group anywhere could have burned with a more patriotic fire. What a glorious time they all had! How they flayed King George and debated the wrongs England was heaping upon them. All of that, of course, behind very tightly, very mysteriously closed doors; for the time had not yet come when even they dared talk out in the open against England's king.

And no one among those boys had more decided opinions on how the government should be run than James Madison had. What is more, with all of his timidity he had a charm that won and held people so that in his own group he was able to express his opinion so brilliantly and forcibly that he was constantly bringing others to think as he thought. Even so, while fairly burning with the fire of his own

patriotic feeling, he had apparently no thought of changing his life plan of entering the ministry. After graduating he stayed on a whole year at college studying for that profession. At the end of the year, however, he left. Following that he never talked of his earlier plans.

Of course when he finally reached home he must have been very confused about what he wanted to do. No doubt that was why he found it impossible to fit into the gay society in and around his old Virginia home. Since that was so, he decided to leave and enter the army, but his health, which had often before that time interfered with his life out-of-doors, again interfered so that door was closed. Then he marked time, for a while, teaching his own brothers and sisters.

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BEING what he was, however, James Madison could not long keep out of public activity. Neither could he then, any more than in college, keep from heading his own particular group. At first that group was a Committee of Public Safety. By 1775 he was chairman of that committee. And in the next year—1776—when Thomas Jefferson was thinking out the Declaration of Independence up in Philadelphia, he—James Madison—walked out into his first really important public service as a member of the Virginia Convention. He was then only twenty-five—among the youngest men of the assembly. But despite his youth and despite the fact that he was still handicapped with his natural shyness, the same power, the same charm that had drawn his fellows to him in his college days, now drew men to trust him, and he was asked to help draft a constitution for Virginia and a resolution for greater religious freedom.

Even so, even though he had won that place for himself and was renominated, he was defeated for reelection to the convention. Perhaps that was because his earlier training in the Church had filled him so full of responsibility concerning other men's behavior that he refused, in his campaign, to follow the usual custom of serving gin to his political supporters. Some people, however, said he was stingy. Others believed what was said and since nothing could be much worse than stinginess in the eyes of hospitable Virginians, those who believed voted against him. Others—who hated, in those days as now, to see a rich man's son in a place of power—joined the opposition. And James Madison lost.

But, after all, that defeat may have been a good thing for James Madison as well as for his country. For, almost at once, he was chosen to be a member of the Council of State, a body looked upon with the highest respect as chief adviser to the Governor of Virginia. Straightway, James Madison was sought out in that body to prepare most of the Governor's papers and to become known as his most trusted counselor.

From this council he went as a Virginia delegate to the Continental Congress. One of the questions most frequently and bitterly absorbing that Congress, then, was that of Virginia's navigation rights on the Mississippi. Those rights were vital to the colony since she claimed the territory extending from the Appalachians to that river, while Spain claimed the land beyond. Naturally, the question concerning traffic going up and down the stream was always a difficult one to settle. John Jay, as we know, had been sent over to Spain to try to adjust it. Madison was now asked to draft instructions to Jay. And so he came to consider that western land as he never had considered it before. Was he surprised at its vastness, its promise of future

development? Did he right then and there tuck away in his mind certain resolves concerning it? If he did he said nothing, but by the time he and his group had completed their plans, each colony claiming any of that land had relinquished their right to the Federal government to do with as seemed best for the good of that whole western valley.

All of that time the Revolution was bringing Great Britain nearer to the Yorktown surrender and thus nearer to losing the thirteen colonies. Both those colonies and the settlements growing up in the west were going to need money once that surrender was made. Even before that, even right then in those closing days of the war, that need was almost too great for the leaders to face. James Madison, of course, knew that need, not only knew it but was working to meet it every second he had to spare from the proposition concerning those claims in the Mississippi valley. Finally, he produced a plan which proposed to tax imported goods for a term of years and to distribute the heavy interest on the national debt among the different states.

All of this activity must have led him to think that he needed a knowledge of law. At any rate, he decided, at the close of his term in the Continental Congress, to go home and study the subject. The next year, however, he was back in the Virginia House of Delegates, where boundary disputes involving claims of Delaware and Pennsylvania were rousing bitter discussion.

Now according to James Madison's way of reasoning, the welfare of one or two states affected the welfare of all. Naturally, therefore, he proposed that a convention be called to which representatives of all the states should be invited. His proposition ended in the Annapolis Convention of 1786, which, in its turn, resulted in one at Philadelphia

the next year. It was at the Philadelphia Convention that James Madison presented what is called the Virginia Plan. That plan furnished the basis for the Constitution of the United States.

As everybody knows, the Constitution was drawn up and finally ratified; Washington became the first president; and the first House of Representatives assembled. Perhaps, however, not everybody knows that James Madison was a member of that first House or that he stayed right on as a member from 1789 to 1797. Perhaps, also, not everybody knows that it was during those years he made his very first public speech. Anyone, however, who did know him then would be sure that the only thing which could break down his shyness and cause him to speak, would be some need more vital than any he had ever met before. And it was vital, vital to him because it was vital to the carrying out of the Constitution. That need was money, money first, followed by the necessity of getting the machinery of government correctly set up and that by another necessity for making amendments to the Constitution, which he, in his quiet wisdom, already saw should be amended.

At the end of those long years in the House of Representatives, he wanted to go home and stay there. He had married Dorothy Payne Todd—famous, fascinating Dolly Madison—three years before. Montpelier, his lovely, quiet old Virginia estate, was waiting for him. He needed all of the rest that home could give him.

So he went home. But he no sooner reached there than the whole country was thrown into turmoil over the Alien and Sedition Laws. What could he do but hurry off to join his friend Thomas Jefferson, then, as vice-president, leading the opposition right in the face of the fact that those laws were considered advisable by President Adams? And

what did Virginia do but elect James Madison to the state legislature right in the midst of the battle.

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And then Thomas Jefferson became president. At once he called James Madison to work with him as his secretary of state. Throughout the whole eight years of Jefferson's administration the small, quiet, very courteous, very scholarly Madison stood back of his friend to make that administration stand out as one of active, desirable progress. Of course those two started many activities that could not be finished in eight years. No doubt that was the chief reason Jefferson let the United States see that he thought Madison was the one man above all others best fitted to complete alone what they had started together.

Evidently the United States agreed with him and James Madison was elected president; elected to face an outraged America shouting to have Jefferson's Embargo Acts lifted, to have England's high-handed sea policies ended. In fact the country preferred war to such indignities. To make matters worse, the new President had, for political reasons, to appoint Robert Smith, entirely opposed to him, as his secretary of state. The future must have loomed dark to James Madison in those early days of his presidency.

And that future grew darker as the days passed. He was able, however, to hold out against war until 1812. That war and his own second term began in the same year. And his troubles increased accordingly. He had known all along that the country was not prepared for war. He had warned those urging him to fight that disaster would follow such an attempt. But even so—when all that he had prophesied came true, and America's land forces met defeat after defeat, James Madison's shoulders were heaped

high with the burden of blame. Fortunately those defeats were partly offset by the victories on water where the American navy burst forth in unexpected brilliance and strength. In the end, England restored her gains to America; America restored hers to England; and neither seemed to remember the original cause of the quarrel.

But James Madison must have looked out in helpless sorrow over battlefields where thirty thousand American men had given their lives, and where an equal number, at least, had been crippled so that life never again could be the free, happy thing it had been before. He must also have looked with dismay at the enormous debt shadowing the slender young treasury. But anyone knowing James Madison also knows that he, while recognizing all of the tragedy the war had brought, would also look up and out toward the Old World with a grim satisfaction in what he saw.

For all of Europe was now stirring uneasily over the strength the new American nation had shown in handling herself and her enemy from 1812 to 1814. Before that time, not all of the oversea rulers had taken America seriously. Following it, those same rulers certainly assumed a new and wholesome deference toward her. Whether it was her brilliant sea-fighting strength; whether her skill in handling trade; whether her shrewd diplomatic power; or whether it was all of these things together—no one could tell. But an enormous strength had somehow or other grown up in amazing swiftness during the very days of the war.

And James Madison sensed that the Old World realized such was the case. With that to comfort him, with the new lands out to the west opening up in greater wealth than even he and Jefferson had hoped, with the Constitution working well in its execution of the plans he and his friends had labored to make, James Madison felt he could

now go home. So he refused a third term and went back to Virginia.

And he had twenty years more in which to live his own life as he wanted to live it there. What did he do? He farmed—much as Thomas Jefferson did, trying out experiments, developing his land, and through all of that work just as through all of his public work, he kept hunting on to the end of his life for ways and means to help not only himself but all of America, all of mankind.

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Chapter III

ON GUARD

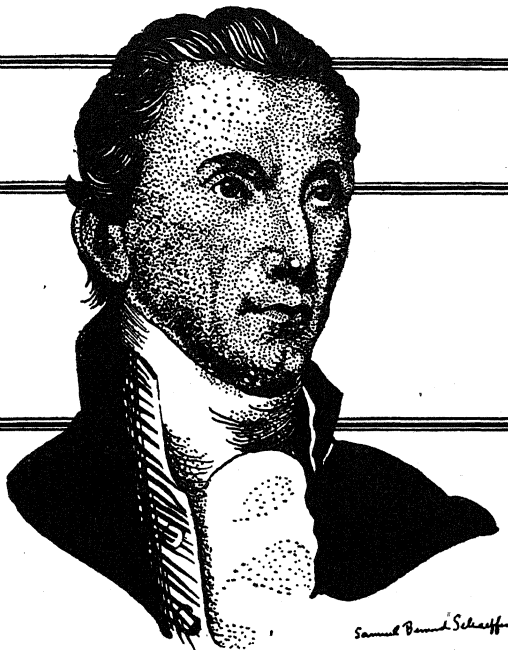
I. JAMES MONROE

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AND now, after Jefferson and Madison, still another man came up from Virginia to sit in the president's chair, not only another Virginian, but another friend of Thomas Jefferson whom he had trusted with many very important missions. Also, a friend of James Madison who had served as secretary of war and then as secretary of state during some of the most troublesome years of the Madison administration. This man was James Monroe.

Added to this valuable experience of working closely with two presidents at home was that of working among government circles abroad. To be sure he had made many a sad mistake in his public life. In fact, for years he was known more for fumbling than he was for winning his game. But he was the sort that learned through his own fumbling, the sort that, instead of being daunted by blame, studied himself to see why he was blamed. Usually he found out and being honest, hard-working, and ready to make amends, he was given other chances. Finally, he walked out to stand securely in public favor, a trusted, capable leader, who could and did accomplish much more than many a man more gifted than he.

And America needed just such a man at that time, a man who knew all the needs of his own land just getting her bearings after the War of 1812; a man who knew—



James Monroe

none better than he—how that land was beginning to be measured by shrewd foreign governments. There was the new territory opening rapidly out to the west. There was the growing and valuable trade looming high along the eastern coast. And to the north and the south just beyond boundaries of the United States, lay other nations and colonies who, because they were weaker, tempted Old World powers to come over and try to gain a firmer foothold on the new continent. There was no question about it. America had now become a world power in herself, with a promise of far greater power lying ahead. As such, she must pay the price of guarding that power. Could she do it? Was she yet strong enough? James Monroe was now to have the chance to find out. Of what stuff was he made to meet such a challenge?

To begin with he was of Scotch descent, and evidently from a family whose blood ran red with the staunch adventurous spirit of that sturdy old nation. That family had already lived in the new land of America over a century when James was born in 1758. Like the Washingtons they liked the Potomac valley in Virginia and there they had settled. There they had stayed generation after generation.

James Monroe grew up hearing all of the talk of that valley. And that talk never flamed higher with patriotism than when James was a boy. His own kin as well as his neighbors were riding back and forth from the Continental Congress where men were actually planning to resist King George's high-handed oppression. Right in the midst of all that controversy, when he was only sixteen, James started to attend the College of William and Mary. And there he found the feeling against Great Britain flaming higher even than among his own people and neighbors. That feeling grew until when news came of the gallant

fight at Lexington and Concord, when the stirring message of the Declaration of Independence rang out through Virginia, the halls, the classrooms, even the chairs of the faculty were emptied, and out marched boys and professors together to fight for that independence.

Of course James Monroe was in those irregular ranks. What is more he fought with other young men of his age at White Plains, Trenton, Brandywine, and on other famous fields. He was promoted; but, to his own disappointment, not as rapidly as he had hoped. To offset that disappointment, however, he met Thomas Jefferson during the time Jefferson was in Virginia working on the reform of that state's laws. Right then and there the two, both from Virginia, both from old William and Mary, began a friendship that lasted—just as that between Madison and Jefferson lasted—throughout life. That friendship grew all the more rapidly when James Monroe, fifteen years younger, began to study law under Jefferson.

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QUITE naturally young Monroe became interested in all that interested Jefferson. That meant getting into the game of politics. Jefferson was then serving Virginia as governor. Monroe became a member of the House of Delegates. Then, later, he, like Madison, was chosen to sit on the Governor's Council. And also, like Madison, he was sent to the Continental Congress to work for Virginia's interests on the Mississippi as well as for the advance of all American trade.

Then came a time of quiet law practice, before he was returned to the Virginia House of Delegates. Since those were the days when all of the states were trying to ratify the Constitution of the United States, James Monroe did his share in his own state convention to bring about Vir-

ginia's acceptance. Perhaps, because he did that work satisfactorily, Virginia sent him on to serve in the first Senate set up under that Constitution. There, because he shared so fully Jefferson's democratic beliefs, he openly and actively opposed President Washington. In spite of that, Washington recognized the younger man's power and appointed him American minister to France.

The appointment came at the time when the greatest tact was necessary to smooth out French exasperation over Jay's Treaty with England. Because of his democratic ideals, Monroe was received with great enthusiasm in France. He might have done much to adjust the trouble there. But, instead, he apparently sympathized with the French and, so, increased rather than decreased their resentment against the treaty. In addition, so far as anyone could determine, he made no effort at all to collect damages for the loss to American vessels caused by the French. In short, James Monroe failed in both of the missions he was sent to accomplish. There was nothing for President Washington to do but recall him. James Monroe, thus publicly embarrassed, felt he had been unjustly used and straightway set forth his reasons for thinking so. Benjamin Franklin published those reasons. The paper offended Washington so deeply that, it is claimed, he never forgave James Monroe for permitting it to go out to the public.

Virginians, however, apparently lost none of their confidence in him, for they elected him governor in 1799 and reelected him for a succeeding term. And, then, Thomas Jefferson became president. He immediately showed how he felt when he called his friend, James Monroe, to go back to France. That was the time when Monroe worked with Livingston in completing the Louisiana Pur-

chase. He did that very acceptably and, if he had stopped with that, he might have done much to offset the criticism of his earlier diplomatic service.

Instead, Jefferson sent him to London to serve as minister to England. He spent four years there and in Spain trying to adjust Spanish claims in Florida, and to make Great Britain cease her interference with American sea trade. He was so unsuccessful in both countries, that Jefferson sent William Pinckney over to help him out, and then the two of them—Monroe and Pinckney—for some unaccountable reason made a treaty with England which left out the very two points they had been instructed to include by the United States government. Such an unexplainable failure was too much even for President Jefferson. In angry disappointment, he immediately returned the treaty with instructions to revise it entirely. But, before there was time to do that, the British made all such negotiations impossible by firing on the *Chesapeake*.

And James Monroe came back to America. After three years, he was once more sent to the Virginia House of Delegates and, then, following that was again elected governor of his state. In the meantime, Madison had struggled through the first trying years of his administration with his Secretary of State opposing all of his policies before the position became vacant and he was free to ask his friend, James Monroe, to come to his rescue.

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No matter how far he had fallen below his country's demands before, James Monroe certainly measured high in the years that followed. Through the dark days just preceding the War of 1812, he stood like a rock back of Madison. His friend had certainly never needed him more.

Then, later, when the war was actually on, the post of Secretary of War became vacant. The President could see no one whom he considered so fit to fill that vacancy as James Monroe. So Monroe was made secretary of war and continued in this post all through the three years of the war with England. That work alone was more than enough for one man to do during those dark days; but James Monroe not only did that but kept right on through the same years being secretary of state.

He must have been a man unafraid of hard work, a man who had learned to keep his head in times of much confused thinking, and he must have learned by then to act decisively—not to fumble—for the people of the United States liked what he did and said so by electing him president in 1816. He served so ably through his first four years that, in his reelection of 1820, he swept the country with his popularity. In fact, there was only one electoral vote cast against him, and that, it is said, was cast so that no man could claim the record of George Washington's unanimous election as President.

Certainly, James Monroe deserves America's gratitude not only for his tremendous work through the years of the War of 1812 but even more for that throughout the eight years of his presidency. When he began those years the country was just coming out from under the burden of its war with England. The vast new western territory was opening rapidly. A young but vigorous trade with foreign lands was thrusting its rights for protection forward. If ever various interests needed a firm hand to pull them together and guide them into a steadily prosperous time of peace, it was in 1816. The man who did that needed to build up a strong central power. In his earlier years, back in the days of Jefferson's strong influence, Monroe

would have fought such a power. But the years between had taught him to modify, somewhat, his unyielding ideas of democracy. He therefore not only worked with those who thought it wise to strengthen federal power, but he even led that policy. Fortunately, several decisions of the Supreme Court supported the policy of the administration by increasing the power of the national government over that of the state.

As a result, the government at Washington acted swiftly to protect trade by a strong tariff and to throw the responsibility for internal improvements back on the states desiring them. The latter was particularly important as six new states carved out of the land lying between the Appalachians and the Mississippi were admitted to the Union between 1816 and 1820. The government could not afford, especially with its treasury exhausted by war, to undertake the building of roads through that rapidly developing territory. But the settlement concerning who should bear the expense of improvements was not nearly so troublesome as trying to settle the question of slavery in that territory. Even back in the years of drawing up the Constitution of the United States, an Ordinance had been made prohibiting slaves in the states to be formed north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi. Since the United States at that time did not own the land west of that river, nothing, of course, had been done about slavery in that vast stretch. Now, however, since the purchase of Louisiana, something had to be done.

Should states formed from that land be admitted as free or slave states? The question raged bitterly until it finally centered about the admission of Missouri. Now, in the Monroe administration, it was answered by the Missouri Compromise, which allowed that state to have slaves,

but prohibited them in all other territory included in the Louisiana Purchase. Through the Compromise, an outbreak between the North and the South was postponed for years.

In the meantime, while handling these matters of trade, internal improvements, and slavery, the Monroe administration had also brought to a satisfactory ending years of conflict with Spain by abandoning claims to Texas and securing, in turn, all rights to Florida.

Having accomplished all of these things and so started his own country well on her way to a prosperous future once more, James Monroe might have stopped right there with a feeling of having accomplished enough for one man's presidency. But no leader of vision could have stopped there content in his mind. For while all was at peace within the borders of the United States, beyond those borders, especially in Mexico and Central America there was a general unrest. There the Spanish colonies had set up their own governments and were just beginning to prosper. Naturally, Spain wanted to regain her power over them and to that end appealed to other European powers to help her. Great Britain, on her part, feared any such alliance and approached the United States to ally herself with England against the movement the Spanish monarch was contemplating. Fortunately James Monroe and John Quincy Adams knew European politics. They knew, also, that George Washington's Proclamation of Neutrality had certainly proved to be a wise one in the young years of the government's development. Still further, they knew that Thomas Jefferson had seen fit to maintain that proclamation when he had said the United States would maintain "peace, commerce and honest friendship" with all nations but would enter into "entangling alli-

ance" with none. In addition to the proved wisdom of those earlier policies, America sympathized with the struggling Spanish colonies. She sympathized with all American efforts to establish American rights to trade and to live according to the demands of the new Western continent. Europe's problems belonged to Europe; America's to America. In view of all of that James Monroe in his Annual Message to Congress, December, 1823, declared

> "We should consider any attempt on their" [the foreign powers] "part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence, and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States."

And thus went forth the famous Monroe Doctrine, which, although worded by John Quincy Adams, expressed the strong feeling President Monroe felt on the subject of European interference with national life on the American continent.

With peace established at home, with peace safeguarded for weaker neighbors, James Monroe saw his presidency end in a gratifying contrast to the confusion and gloom of

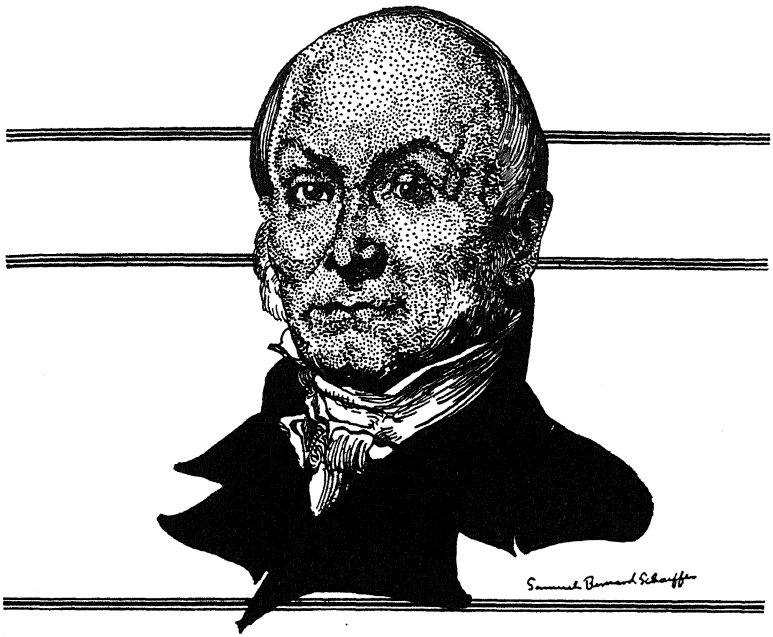
its beginning. Certainly he should have been able to retire at peace in his own life. But, like Jefferson, he had been forced to spend much more than his salary. Like his friend, also, he had not been able, because of public demands, to develop his own private fortune. How could he go back to his home at Oak Hill, Virginia, to live as his position demanded he should live? Finally, Congress voted him $30,000 to make his last days easier. Those days came to an end at his daughter's home in New York on Independence Day, 1831—thus making the third president out of the first five to die on that anniversary. He was buried in New York. Twenty-seven years later, Virginia decided to take him home with great honors to Richmond.

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STANDING high on a hill, holding tight to his mother's hand, small John Quincy Adams saw the British soldiers driven back from Bunker Hill. Down in Philadelphia his father was busily planning with other men from the thirteen colonies to make the American victory count forever and a day. John Quincy Adams knew all of that. Not only knew it, but believed the victory was bound to come; just as his father believed it, and just as they both were to work to maintain it worthily when once it had come.

For the Adams family were made of just such stern reliable stuff as that. From the time they had landed on the wind-swept coast of old Massachusetts away back in 1640, they had lived on in the town of Braintree set down against rugged granite hills facing the sea. And every generation had found them not only stronger in body, mind, and prosperity, but stronger in devoted loyalty to the new land.

With such a family back of him, with a father devoting all of his time to helping the new nation get started right, John Quincy, himself, very early had his own ideas of what he owed that nation. Those ideas had a chance to develop in a remarkable way, for when he was only eleven years old, his father was sent on a diplomatic mission to Paris and took his small son with him. He studied there; also at Leipzig and Amsterdam. He traveled—a mere slip of a lad—to Russia as private secretary to Francis Dana, United States envoy. But Russia refused to receive that envoy, and small John Quincy traveled back to Paris where he, at fourteen, acted as one of the sec-



J. Q. Adams.

retaries to the commission working on the peace treaty to conclude the American Revolution.

When that treaty was finally completed, John Adams went to London. John Quincy, however, announced that he was coming back to America to enter Harvard College. So back he came to take his full course and to graduate when he was twenty. After that he spent three years studying law and was admitted to the bar.

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BUT by that time, George Washington was reaching out for every well-equipped man to help start the machinery of government to running smoothly and surely. John Quincy's own father, as first vice-president, was equally anxious that all should go well. There were very few young men in America as well trained to help both of them as John Quincy Adams. So he was sent as minister to the Netherlands. Because there was very little to do there, Washington asked him, two years later, to go to Portugal. Before he had time to begin his work there, Washington's second term ended, his own father became second president of the United States, and immediately sent his son to Berlin to put through a treaty establishing more friendly relations as well as more favorable regulations of commerce between the Prussians and America.

When John Adams was defeated for reelection, John Quincy Adams returned home, where he was elected, immediately, to the Massachusetts Senate. The next year he was sent to the United States Senate. There he found the battle which had so sorely tried his father, still raging. Now, although the Adams family were loyal one to the other, each was also loyal to his own beliefs, even if those beliefs differed from those of the rest of family. John Quincy,

therefore, saw no reason why he should always believe or vote as his father had voted. The country was growing rapidly. New policies were needed to meet that growth. The old unyielding group of Federalists to which his father had belonged had decreased in numbers and power. John Quincy could get nowhere by joining that group.

On the other hand he approved of many things Thomas Jefferson, his father's political opponent, was doing. He saw no reason why he should not say so by voting with Jefferson's Republican followers in the Senate. Immediately his own party turned on him and his troubles began. But those first troubles were as nothing compared to the ones he faced later when he supported the Embargo Act so bitterly opposed by his own Massachusetts following. That support cost him his place in the Senate.

Perhaps, however, John Quincy Adams was somewhat glad to be free of all responsibility to that party. At any rate, he cut loose from it at the next Republican caucus—not only cut loose, but took his stand with the Jeffersonian party by voting for James Madison.

Madison, in turn, remembering the long experience John Quincy Adams had had in European countries, sent him as a minister to Russia. Thirty years had passed since he, as a small boy, had gone there with Francis Dana, only to have the Russian government refuse to recognize the government of the United States. Now, Russia not only received him as his country's official representative, but did so with high honor. In fact, when the war of 1812 was declared, the Russian Czar offered to help Adams work for peace with England. America accepted the offer, with orders for Adams to join the commission when it arrived in Europe. That first effort failed, but, later, when England decided the war was not going as she had hoped

and so was ready for peace, Adams sat at Ghent with Gallatin, Bayard, Jonathan Russell, and Henry Clay to draw up the terms.

From Ghent he went to Paris—a Paris wild with the excitement over Napoleon's triumphant return from his short exile on the island of Elba. He was there when that General entered the city. He heard and saw the French receive their adored leader with a frenzy of joy. He also heard and saw the whole of Europe gather to crush him. He saw the end come with the defeat at Waterloo. What did he think of all that—this reserved, stern man from New England?

No doubt he was only too glad to turn his back on it all and double his efforts to make his own government even more steadily, permanently sure. Those efforts took him to England to work with Clay and Gallatin on a treaty which, it was hoped, would clear up certain interferences with America's commerce. While doing that, he received word that he had been made minister to Great Britain. London was certainly to know the Adams family in that position. There had been John Adams as the first American to assume the dignity of that post. Now John Quincy was to see whether he was any better fitted for it than his father had been. Later John Quincy's son was to have a third chance to make good the family name at the court of England,

John Quincy stayed in the position for two years before President Monroe recalled him to make him secretary of state in his cabinet. In that capacity John Quincy Adams had the satisfaction of again working on the Florida question begun under Jefferson. This time he was to see his work tell when Spain finally ceded Florida to the United States. He was also to have the satisfaction of drawing up the Monroe Doctrine so as to include what he was convinced—from

his wide experience in Europe—it should include, and to see the United States accept it as a means of safeguarding the Western continent.

By the time that doctrine was announced, the end of President Monroe's administration was near enough in sight for political leaders to be figuring openly on who was to be the next president. Although the country itself had been going prosperously, peacefully on, political leaders at Washington had developed widely different, conflicting opinions on what was next to be done. Fully five of those leaders wanted to sit in the president's chair. Three of them, Adams himself, Calhoun, and Crawford worked towards that end within Monroe's own cabinet. But the two most feared, Henry Clay and Andrew Jackson, were outside that close circle. Those two, brilliant and fearless, had a devoted following.

All five of these men ran for the presidency, and one of the worst tangles ever known in any presidential race resulted. Andrew Jackson, looming tall as a western favorite, received the most electoral votes; Adams came second; Crawford followed Adams; and last came Clay. But no one of the four had a majority. That meant that the House of Representatives had to take the election over. Since the Constitution permitted only the three highest to be considered, Clay was eliminated. He, in his turn, persuaded his followers to turn their votes to John Quincy Adams.

And so John Quincy Adams became sixth president of the United States with Calhoun as vice-president. He at once appointed Henry Clay to lead his cabinet as secretary of state. Of course all of the opposing factions pounced upon Adams for having traded that post for the votes Clay had managed to turn his way. Knowing John Quincy

Adams, knowing the whole Adams family, in fact, as the country did know them, it should have refused to believe any such accusations. But party feeling was running high. Andrew Jackson was shouting all up and down the West against what he felt had been an outrage in the recent election.

John Quincy Adams, therefore, took his oath of office in the midst of a turmoil not unlike the one his father had faced twenty-eight years before. Like his father, John Quincy Adams was splendidly fitted to lead as president, well trained at home and abroad, fearless and honest. But still further, like his father, he now clung to policies fast losing support with a new generation. No doubt he was often right, but no doubt, also, he failed to act in sympathy with his people. That lack of cooperation, together with the bitter opposition he met in Congress brought failure after failure to the measures he tried to enforce.

There was, for example, the trouble of adjusting Indian titles down in Georgia where the whites, impatient of delay, took matters into their own hands and openly defied and humiliated the Adams administration. There was also the Tariff Bill of 1828, so impossible in its details as to be called the Tariff of Abominations. Because, however, even bad as it was, it was better for trade than no bill at all, the Adams men voted for it, the President signed it, and it became a law, only to add to his unpopularity.

But what must have been harder for John Quincy Adams to accept than these disappointments in his home policies, were his failures to carry out successfully American relations with foreign powers. For it was during his administration that the British West Indies closed their ports to American trade. That was a severe blow to his power. Then when he tried to extend national friendliness by

accepting an invitation to attend a Congress of all American republics held in Panama, Congress bickered so long over arrangements that the representatives reached Panama after the Congress had adjourned.

In the face of all that, there was nothing for John Quincy Adams to do but go home at the end of his one term as president. Anyone would think that he had earned a right to stay there. He was now sixty-two. He had served his country in practically every capacity, both at home and abroad. Nevertheless, there were things he still saw to be done—chiefly about slavery—things which he believed an Adams could and should make an effort to do.

So, a year later, when asked to run as a member of the House of Representatives, he did so, was elected, and then reelected throughout the remaining years of his life. And those years were many; for he lived to be eighty, lived to fight the extension of slavery, vigorously, fearlessly, up to the minute he dropped on the floor of the House with an attack of apoplexy. That day was the last in his long public service for he died shortly afterwards, February 23, 1848, and was taken back to rest at Quincy, Massachusetts, in the land of the Adams family.

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Chapter IV

NEW BLOOD

I. ANDREW JACKSON

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AFTER nearly forty years of drawing the presidents from two states, the people of the United States clamored loudly for a change. No doubt it had been just as well that the six men leading the government that far had been exactly who and what they were: four of them from Virginia—gracious, courtly, scholarly plantation owners; two from the granite hills of old Massachusetts—stern, abrupt, clear-thinking, and just. Nevertheless, times had changed. The first quarter of the new century was passed. A new generation had grown up with new views. New lands had been added. No two states, no matter how powerful, no matter how different one was from the other, could any longer say—continuously say—who should sit in the president's chair.

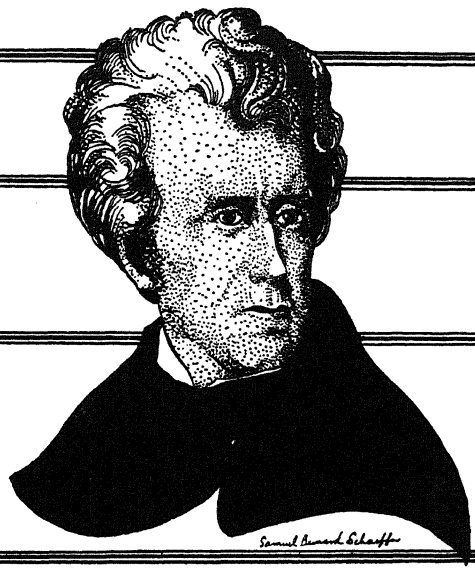
To be sure Thomas Jefferson had done much to upset the idea that a strong central government run by a few leaders was the only safe sort of government. He had, in fact, gone far to give the people of the United States a more far-reaching vision—a vision of a government where every state should have an equal voice with every other state in saying what should be done and how. And while, after his presidency, the old policy of rule by a few had never returned in its full force again, still nobody could claim

that Jefferson's dream of a more representative group at Washington had come true as he had claimed that it could.

But now—now with the new western states growing sturdily strong in numbers and wealth, with the people living out in those states growing daily more sure in their independent thinking, who could expect the United States would any longer think it was wise for any one section of the country, any one group of men to say what all the others should do and be?

Besides, there was Andrew Jackson. For four years now—ever since Congress had decided against him for president in favor of John Quincy Adams—that man had been shouting, in a loud and compelling voice, about the way the country's affairs were being run at Washington. So far as that went, he had been objecting to them always—ever since he first appeared as a representative in President Washington's time. The only difference now was that he not only was objecting more emphatically, but that he had attracted a party behind him who gave his objections support throughout the whole country. And since he stood up head and shoulders above that party, a picturesque, dramatic, fiery, and fearless southwestern frontiersman, that country not only heard him but saw him. Could anyone be more different from the past generation of gracious, scholarly Virginians and severely self-controlled New Englanders who had ruled the land through all of its younger years? Certainly he promised the change the people were clamoring to have. So those people decided to make him their next president. In doing so, what did they do? What sort of a man did they really choose?

In the first place, Andrew Jackson was Irish. In fact, his father, mother and two brothers had only been over from old Antrim County, Ireland, about a year when Andrew



Andrew Jackson

himself was born. This one fact of inheritance alone might have made him stand out as different from the six presidents before him, all of whom, besides being originally of English blood, had several generations of American ancestry back of them—generations who had clung close to the eastern coast.

On the other hand, the Jackson family had passed right through the settled eastern strip, had struck the trail through the wilderness lying beyond, and had followed that trail until it brought them to the frontier border line between the two Carolinas where an Irish settlement promised them neighbors of their own kind. And there on the banks of the upper Catawba, in a tiny town called Waxham, Andrew Jackson was born, March 15, 1767, just a few days after his own father's death.

Since that father died without leaving much more than a copper behind him and without having yet acquired so much as an acre of land, Andrew's young mother was left single-handed to wrench shelter, food, and clothing for herself and three children out of the wilderness about her. But neighbors were really neighbors along that Carolina frontier, and Andrew Jackson's mother was the sort that knew how to live as one of them. Food of a rough kind was to be had by hunting and fishing. Shelter could be made from the forest timber. Clothing could, if necessary, be wrought from skins of wild beasts. After all, life, even for the very poor, was possible out there in those early days. And it was free—free and invigorating as the wind which swept through long stretches of unbroken forests lying between that frontier and the far-away Atlantic coast colonies.

It was a lucky thing for Andrew's mother that the wilderness did offer her food and shelter in return for long days

of back-breaking work; for her sons certainly gave her plenty to worry about without losing sleep over hunger and cold. Since those boys were very alive, very curious, and absolutely without fear, they fell into trouble with the British soldiers invading the border settlements. For one thing, Andrew, rising in all of the might of his young years, refused, point-blank, to brush the boots of an English officer. Whereupon the officer struck him. In addition, he and his brother were taken prisoners and their mother had to visit the British camp and beg for their release. Not long afterwards she died as a result of exposure while traveling to Charleston to help care for prisoners there. After her death, Andrew's two brothers lost their lives through the privations brought upon them in those years of the Revolution.

All of which meant that Andrew Jackson stood alone in his world when he was only fourteen. That world was composed of men who had set up very rigid codes of honor and who stood ready to fight for those codes at the drop of a hat. Life among them was full of adventure, full of horse-racing, cock-fighting—full of everything, it appears, except opportunity for going to school. What could a fourteen-year-old boy, without home or family, do for himself with such irresponsible living going on all about him?

Nobody is very sure what he could or did do for several years. But whatever happened, he came out at the end of those years strengthened in his belief in his own power. Perhaps it was this belief which led him to study law, just as it led many another self-assertive young westerner to do the same thing. Certainly he had nothing else to depend on to help him. So far as anyone knows, he had no regular schooling in all of his life. But, in the face of even that

drawback, he plunged ahead and three years later was admitted to the bar.

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THE very next year, in 1788, his friend, John McNairy, became judge of the Superior Court of the Western District of North Carolina—now Tennessee—and Andrew Jackson, very shortly afterwards, was made public prosecutor. That meant moving to Nashville. It also meant that he had to take a stern, unrelenting, fearless stand against all law-breakers. Their tribe was numberless down in that southwestern land of broken contracts, of struggles between the Indians and whites, of fierce rebellion against everything which interfered with a man's living his own life exactly as he wanted to live it regardless of man-made laws and order. Andrew Jackson, once having taken on the power of prosecutor, determined to enforce that power so as to make the whole countryside remember him. Out he rode in the face of threats, in the face of bitter blame from both friend and foe, to compel obedience to law. And he did what he set out to do and in doing so became known far and wide as a man of relentless force, who, once he was certain that a law had been broken, did his duty most thoroughly and effectively.

As the southwestern frontier did not offer many of his sort, political leaders soon came to look upon him as one whom it was wise to watch, to use, and, if necessary, to honor. That is why Andrew Jackson appeared later in the group who formed the Constitution of Tennessee; why he was also sent to represent that state in the first House of Representatives and from there to the United States Senate. In these national representative bodies, he came quickly into the public limelight as one of the very

few men who constantly, vigorously opposed President Washington.

Having thus made himself known, he resigned as United States senator, in 1798, to become judge of the Supreme Court of Tennessee. Several years later he drew attention once more his way by his unfaltering friendship with, and open defense of, Aaron Burr. This attitude of his—so strangely defiant of general public opinion—was quite in accord with many other things in his life during those years. Quick to take offense, and, once having taken it, never forgetting it, never relenting towards the offender, he had long been famous for his quarrels.

In fact, in his earlier court days one of those quarrels had—according to the code of that border country—brought on a duel between him and his opponent. Both of the men had then, intentionally, fired in the air, so that the affair had ended harmlessly. Ten years later, however, in 1806, when another quarrel caused him to fight a duel with Charles Dickinson, Andrew Jackson not only fired at his man, but killed him. In turn, Jackson, himself, received a wound from which he never entirely recovered. Some half a dozen years later he was again wounded, slightly this time, in a shooting affray in a Nashville tavern.

It was during the year of this last outburst, that he was sent as major general of militia over into Georgia and Alabama to help settle the trouble there with the Creek Indians. There he won two victories. As a result, he was made major general of the regular army and was sent to fight the British in the southern campaign of 1814.

Now, Andrew Jackson, true to his nature, had never stopped hating the British for the bitter boyish grief he felt they had brought in the long-ago death of his mother

and brothers. Perhaps that is why he struck with a force that brought first the capture of Pensacola, and second, the famous victory of New Orleans. Immediately following the latter triumph he proclaimed martial law in that city and set about enforcing it with such merciless thoroughness that he was fined a thousand dollars for banishing a judge together with others, in his wide sweep of power. Of course, Jackson never forgot that fine and later managed to get Congress not only to repay him the principal but a heavy interest as well.

Three years after his New Orleans victory he was placed in command of a force against the Seminole Indians. He followed those Indians into Spanish territory over in Florida. There, in a very high-handed manner, he arrested and executed two British subjects. Naturally, this caused an uproar of criticism and Jackson once more found himself the center of conflict. This time that conflict had spread so as to become international. Fortunately, the purchase of Florida in James Monroe's administration ended the dispute and the storm once more died away.

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THIS last episode marked the end of Andrew Jackson's military career. He was then free to return to his home and resume his political life, practically abandoned for over twenty years. Evidently, his fellow citizens were glad to welcome him back; also his political party of Tennessee, for, even in 1822, the General Assembly of that state began to push him for president. With that end in view they sent him to the United States Senate, with the result that he flamed out as leader of the new Democratic party in that famous presidential campaign at the close of Monroe's eight-year administration. That campaign ended with an

election which failed to give any one of the candidates the majority necessary to make him president. Congress settled the matter by electing John Quincy Adams. Of course, Andrew Jackson was outraged. What is more, he, according to his nature, never stopped saying so.

Still further, while he was saying so he managed to put forth over and again his idea of popular sovereignty, by which he meant that all of the people, east, west, north and south, should have a voice in the national government; a voice far louder and coming far more directly from each individual citizen, than that which Thomas Jefferson had claimed ought to be heard and heeded from each individual state. With all of his Irish wit and frontier directness, he stirred the American people up to a white heat of resentment over the wrong he made them feel had been done both them and himself in the recent election. He even brought the old Republican party to a split over the issue, with one side taking its stand under the new banner of the Jacksonian democrats, while the other remained with the old conservative group as Whigs, under the leadership of John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay. As time passed, Andrew Jackson's influence continued to grow. The new generation liked his brusque, often uncouth, always vivid manner of doing things. Besides, they were tired of the cautiously safe and formal doings of the group which had so long ruled over affairs of government.

And, therefore, Andrew Jackson, known to his country as Old Hickory ever since his record in the War of 1812, became president under a new order of thinking and acting. He brought into his office the fearless, unyielding strength which had earned him that name; he brought the resourcefulness developed in his frontier life; and he also brought all of the red-blooded swift daring of his Irish race.

And he used them all in a federal house cleaning that set the United States to gasping in dismay and astonishment. Out went the Adams men, out went others who had stayed right on in public office from one administration to the next; in came those who had shouted for Jackson and the new Democratic party. And so began what is known as the spoils system. In a short nine months the Jackson administration swept out 1000 opposing Federal officials as against only 160 removed in the forty years previous.

Added to this startling change in the usual order at Washington, Jackson treated his cabinet members much as he had treated his men in the army—as inferiors. Since those members were among the most outstanding men of the country, they, quite naturally, resented such treatment. Jackson thereupon ignored them by turning to a small group of his own friends for advice.

While the country was gasping over all of these very new, high-handed changes from the old quiet order of things, the Jackson administration began its famous war on the Bank of the United States. In connection with this the President vetoed the bill for the bank's recharter and ordered public deposits transferred from it to be distributed among a number of local banks. When Congress passed a resolution criticising him for this action, he managed to have that resolution revoked and even expunged from the Congressional records.

Another dramatic show of power was given when two war vessels, together with land troops, appeared in South Carolina to force that state to cease its efforts to nullify certain tariff laws. To be sure, President Jackson, immediately after, favored a lowering of tariff to extend gradually over a number of years. But even this latter compromise did not quiet the South where slavery was really standing

in the way of commercial advance but where the southerners were trying to throw the blame for the slowing up of their trade on the government's tariff restrictions.

This resentment grew. The North took up the quarrel. Anti-slavery speeches, publications, and meetings became more and more frequent. Petitions were sent to Congress protesting against slave ownership. The Southerners insisted all such petitions be tabled. This was the struggle to which John Quincy Adams, following his own presidency, gave the strength of his body and mind in the House of Representatives. It was the struggle, also, which began then and was never to cease until the Civil War ended it.

Fortunately, while all of this struggle was going on at home, Jackson was being very successful in handling foreign financial relations in connection with the collection of old claims, the payment of which he compelled to be made in specie. That policy which formed a source of greatly increased Federal income, was, however, overbalanced by his constant interference with banking affairs at home. Finally the inevitable crash came in the country's money affairs—a crash that laid the whole of the United States low financially for over half a dozen years.

Nevertheless, Andrew Jackson was popular. So popular, in fact, that he had been reelected in the midst of the early excitement over his handling of the Bank of the United States. What is more, that reelection carried with it an overwhelming majority. Still further his popularity increased in his second term as president. Which meant that the new Democratic party was becoming more and more firmly established.

One would have thought that at the end of his presidency Andrew Jackson would have been glad to rest after fighting his whole life through. Perhaps he would have been but

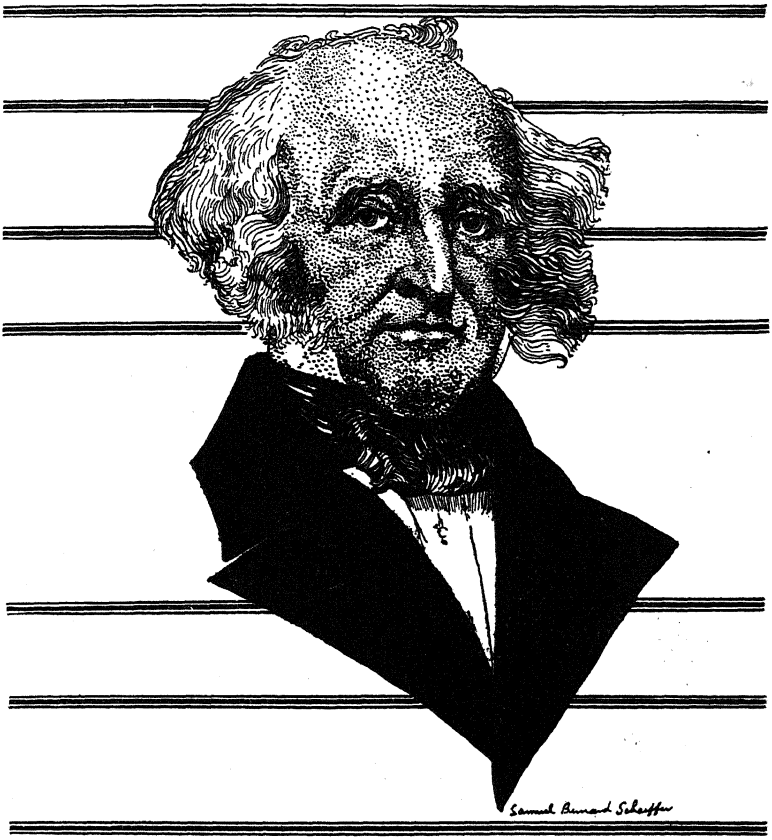
could not give up his many quarrels long enough even to try. At any rate his last days seem to have been full of all his old-time conflict with neighbors and friends—full to the end which came in 1845, at his home, The Hermitage, near Jacksonville, Tennessee.

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To balance Andrew Jackson's hot Irish blood and direct frontier manner of speaking and acting, there had been Martin Van Buren, who was Dutch, cool-blooded, and smoothly calm; Martin Van Buren who had worked unceasingly to make Jackson president, and then when that was finally done, had served as Secretary of State in Jackson's first administration, and vice-president in the second. In addition to standing loyally by his tempestuous chief, he had worked early and late to build up the new Democratic party; and to make himself so surely the leader of that party, that he walked straight into the presidency when Jackson walked out.

If he were unlike Andrew Jackson, he was also equally unlike any president preceding Jackson. How could he help being so? The little old Dutch town of Kinderhook, New York, where he was born in 1782, was certainly different from any birthplace so far represented at Washington; different in manner of living even if not so different in manner of thinking about the United States. Martin Van Buren's own father had gone out with the other Dutch farmers about him to fight loyally for American freedom. When that fight ended, however, he had gone back to Kinderhook with his neighbors to till his land thriftily and to let other men to the north and the south take care of what followed.

But his son Martin early showed that he had other ideas of life. When he had taken all there was to take from the village schools—which was not very much in those days—he began to study law. He was then only fourteen. He had no money. So, to earn his way, he swept the office,



M Van Buren

built the fires, and ran errands hither and yon. In spite of these interruptions he did such good, thorough work, that one of New York City's best-known lawyers took him into his office to finish his course; which he did when only nineteen. Shrewd, thrifty, friendly-mannered, well prepared, Martin Van Buren then began his law practice, which at the end of twenty-five years, yielded him an income sufficiently large to make him at ease financially.

And all of the time he was going about his business of law, he was adding to his reputation as a clever political leader. That reputation had started away back in his Kinderhook days when he led in the hot discussions carried on among the young men of that village. Even in those days he had stood out so prominently that he had been sent to carry the Jeffersonian banner to two New York counties at a Republican convention. The political ability he had shown then and in the years of his law practice following, had brought him the acquaintanceship of many powerful political leaders. Among them were Aaron Burr and De Witt Clinton. Nothing speaks more significantly for Martin Van Buren's keen insight than that he managed to avoid any entanglement with Burr who was a friend of the New York group of lawyers with whom Martin studied. On the other hand, the alliance he made with the powerful Clintonian party was an equally strong proof of his political judgment.

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Of course, with all of his legal ability, with all of his political shrewdness, Martin Van Buren was bound to be in line for public office. And so, when twenty-six—seven years after starting his law practice—Martin Van Buren was elected surrogate of Columbia County, New York.

He held that position for five years. But it was in 1812 that he really began to attract attention as a man with whom it was well to reckon in any New York political game. That year he entered the United States Senate to stay until 1820, supporting Madison's policy in the War of 1812, and later, voting "No" on the question of slavery in Missouri. During half of those years he was also attorney-general in his own state.

By that time he had not only fallen out with the Clintonian group, but had formed his own group and brought it up to such strength that when he walked out as presidential elector in 1820, every political faction in the United States had its eyes on him. And every wide-awake thinking American was also watching both him and his party for it was that party which—in New York—was beginning to put into practice the astounding spoils system—that system which permitted the victor in an election to claim the spoils. Since those spoils were nothing more or less than good salaried public positions, the application of it meant turning out the defeated party's officeholders good or bad, and filling their places with men—good and bad—from the victorious party. Fitness for the service meant practically nothing in the spoils system; support of the party meant everything.

And it was Martin Van Buren, New York's chief defender of this system, who, as far back as 1820, saw in Andrew Jackson the man he considered best fitted for president. Right then and there he pinned his faith to the Tennessee leader, a faith which, supported by his own political shrewdness, found its fulfillment seven years later, when Andrew Jackson succeeded John Quincy Adams. But, although Martin Van Buren was not only shrewd but was generally safe in his shrewdness, he, for once,

overshot his mark in that campaign of 1828. For it was then that he and his group planned the Tariff of Abominations, hoping through public resentment of the bill to turn votes against Adams, but never intending the bill to pass. It did pass, however; and the resentment, even more bitter than Martin Van Buren expected, was to turn full force against him later when the loss which the bill brought was grasped by the country.

None of this, however, affected the strong hold he had on his own New York party. He was reelected to the Senate in 1827, only to resign the next year when he was elected governor of New York, and then, later to resign the governorship, as well, in order to accept President Jackson's appointment as Secretary of State. Certainly Van Buren showed great tact and political skill by the way he avoided Jackson's personal quarrels, while all the time supporting the President's broader administration policies. In his own position as Secretary of State, he was so successful in adjusting America's West India trade question with England that he did much to further the President's popularity both at home and abroad. By this last service he also put himself in line to have Jackson appoint him minister to England in 1831. He resigned his place in the cabinet to accept the English post. He even arrived in London where his statesmanlike bearing brought him a hearty welcome. But, in the meantime, back home, Calhoun, vice-president and leader of the opposition to President Jackson, had managed to get the Senate to refuse to ratify the Van Buren appointment to England.

Of course, there was nothing for Martin Van Buren to do but to return to America. No doubt he must have been embarrassed, angry, and disappointed. If so when he finally reached home he certainly had cause to rejoice over

his political enemies. For while the people of the United States might not approve of all that Van Buren had done, they just as surely, now, did not approve of Calhoun and the Senate's action against him. That is probably the chief reason that Van Buren was then nominated vice-president and found his name standing just below Jackson's at the head of the Democratic ticket.

At the end of President Jackson's second four years, Martin Van Buren's name advanced to the top of that ticket. And the Dutch boy, son of a small farmer from the tiny, friendly, quiet village of Kinderhook, became the eighth president of the United States. He remained loyal even then to Jackson—loyal in the face of the clamor caused largely by the president's financial policies.

To quiet that clamor he put forth the subtreasury law which was accepted in 1840. In compliance with this law, the government built vaults at Washington, New York, Boston, Charleston, and St. Louis, where government funds could be handled. Of course, Martin Van Buren could not hope to grow in popularity under the country's discontent, especially when he, himself, surrounded his own administration with a display of luxury to offend, even further, his Democratic followers. But, regardless of whether that popularity grew less or grew more, he stood, like a stone wall for what he considered best for that country's welfare. Looking back now through the years, men conclude that what he thought was best—was very often so.

But the people of his own day could not see that. And when he ran for a second term he was defeated. After that he did just what one likes to know he would do. He went back to the little Dutch town of Kinderhook where he had an estate known as Lindenwald. But instead of living quietly there, as one also wishes he might have done, he

kept on playing the game of politics. In 1844 he even received a majority of votes for the presidential nomination, but since he did not receive the necessary two-thirds, his name was eliminated from the ticket. Again, four years later, his name came up. This time by two factions of the Democratic party—the Barn Burners and the Free Soilers. Neither one of his group gained even one electoral vote—so once more, Martin Van Buren lost even before starting to run for president.

But, although he never again led a campaign, he kept up his interest in politics to the end of his life, in 1862. Those who knew him in those last days give a pleasant picture of him as one who never grew bitter over defeat, who never lost his rare ability to work with men, or his even rarer ability to judge his opponent fairly.

III. WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON AND JOHN TYLER

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"TIPPECANOE and Tyler too!" the Whigs shouted up and down the land all through the campaign of 1840. Never had the whole country let loose in quite such a wild manner. All that was luxurious, all that was extravagant was laid to the door of President Van Buren. All that was simple and plain was centered in the log cabin which dragged hither and yon in campaign parades as the symbol of William Henry Harrison's way of living—William Henry Harrison—hero of the Battle of Tippecanoe, typical man from the west, head of the Whig ticket for president. But even while showing all this devotion to western ideals, the Whigs recognized the presence of other parts of the country by nominating John Tyler from Virginia, thus hoping to swing the vote of the South with that of the West.

For that matter, William Henry Harrison was also a Virginian by birth, the son of a signer of the Declaration of Independence and one-time governor of that state. William Henry, himself, had even grown up and graduated in a classical course from Hampden-Sidney College, Virginia. Then he had gone to Philadelphia to study medicine and probably would have stayed right on in the East if his father's death had not compelled him to give up his dream of being a physician. Only eighteen at the time, he entered the army, was sent out to the Middle West, and by 1797, six years later, had been promoted to captain.

After that, through Jefferson, he was made secretary of the vast Northwest Territory, then, later, governor of both the Indiana Territory and that of Louisiana, before Tecumseh, the Indian chief, led his braves out to war, and



W H Harrison

Harrison, meeting them on the banks of the Wabash River, won the Battle of Tippecanoe. That victorious battle, really a forerunner of the War of 1812, brought him into his first real prominence. Rising rapidly to the rank of major general, he held that commission until 1814, when he resigned to accept an appointment from President Madison which sent him back to the Northwest to negotiate with the Indians who were allied with the British against America. He handled the red tribes so successfully that from that time on, whenever trouble arose between England and the United States, the majority of the Indians of that section allied themselves with the Americans.

Continuing loyal to his interests in pioneer life, General Harrison was sent to Congress in 1816 to work for generally needed improvements in the Middle West. That was just at the time Monroe was throwing all responsibility for such improvements back on the states. After that he served in both the Ohio and the United States Senate before representing his country as minister to Colombia. Perhaps it was because his foreign work was not very successful that he gave up all public life and retired to the little town of North Bend, Ohio.

It was while living his own quiet life there that he was first thought of as good Whig presidential timber. He even led the opposition to Martin Van Buren following Andrew Jackson's second administration. Although he was defeated at that time, he surprised everybody by the strength of his following. Four years later, he was again nominated and that time won—won not so much for being a Whig as for the direct contrast he made to Martin Van Buren. For Harrison's political record was a very clean record. That, added to his very simple, quiet manner of living, certainly appealed to the American people after the strenu-

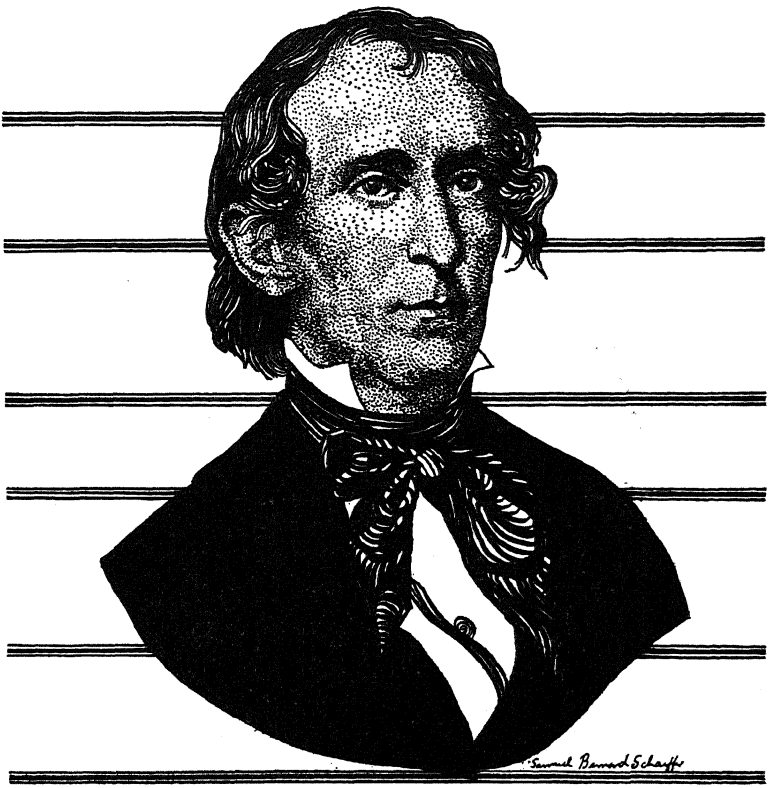
ous life they had lived under Jackson and Van Buren. So he swept the country at the election of 1840.

But the country's rejoicing lasted only a month to the very day after William Henry Harrison took his oath of office, for after only a ten days' illness with pneumonia—aggravated by the on-sweep of ruthless office-seekers—he died, and John Tyler came to the president's chair in April, 1841.

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Now, John Tyler, as has been said, was, like Harrison, from Virginia. He had also heard politics talked from his earliest boyhood, for his father was a governor of Virginia and a United States district judge. Still further, like Harrison, he also had gone to a Virginia school, beginning with the grammar grades of William and Mary and going on to graduate from that college. After that there was nothing similar in the lives of the two. Where Harrison studied medicine, became a soldier, a man of influence out in the middle-west and northwest territory just opening up to settlement, John Tyler studied law, continued to live in his own state, and to carry on his political career from there.

In fact, when he was only twenty-one, John Tyler was elected a member of the Virginia House of Delegates. What is more he remained a member for five years and on top of that went on to Washington for four years in the national House of Representatives. And it was in the latter capacity that he began to show his tendency to think and act independently of his political party. That was a disturbing thing for any political leader to do in those days—just as it is now. His party learned, however, after a time that while he could not always be counted on to do what his party expected, there were certain things about



John Tyler

which he never changed. For example, all of his life he believed in Jefferson's type of democracy; all of his life he opposed internal improvements and high tariff. But, when it came to the very important question of slavery—no one was sure where John Tyler stood or what he would do.

At the end of his four years in Congress, his health broke and he refused reelection. But he apparently regained his strength not long after, for two years later, he was back in the Virginia House of Delegates; then was elected governor of his state for two successive terms before he returned to Washington—this time as a United States senator. In this last position he again upset all calculation of his party by going his own way according to his own beliefs. To be sure, those beliefs sometimes led him along with that party; but just as frequently they sent him off in the opposite direction. Despite all this uncertainty concerning his actions and vote, he kept right on being reelected. Evidently he was a good politician.

At least, that is what the Whigs seemed to think when they placed him—a Democrat—second to Harrison on their presidential ticket. If Harrison could, through his picturesque wilderness life and his reliable political service capture the general Western and Northern vote, they reasoned that the Virginian Tyler could, as we have said before, swing the Southern vote into line. And they reasoned well so far as that vote went, but what they had not foreseen was the possibility of Tyler's becoming chief executive as he did after Harrison's death.

And the triumphant shouting of the Whigs soon died away in growls of discontent. To be sure, Tyler made a real attempt to follow Harrison's policies. For example, he started to keep the Harrison cabinet, but when he un-

expectedly vetoed his party's pet bill for the establishment of a new Federal banking system, that cabinet, with the exception of Daniel Webster, resigned in a body. He also vetoed a tariff bill which would have increased duties just when the country was in dire need of more revenue. Aside from these negative decisions, the Tyler administration saw the negotiations over the northeastern boundary brought to a close through a treaty drawn up by Daniel Webster, Secretary of State, and Lord Ashburton, British minister at Washington. By the terms of this treaty England and the United States each yielded territorial claims held since 1783 with the result that the present northeastern boundary of Maine was fixed as the dividing line between Canada and the United States. No sooner was that done, than Daniel Webster also resigned from the cabinet.

And Calhoun took his place—Calhoun, a slave owner, who, it was widely known, was one of the leaders who was determined to see Texas admitted to the Union as a slave state. Of course, Texas, full of invading Southerners who under the leadership of Samuel Houston had declared their independence of Mexico, wanted what Calhoun wanted; also what John Tyler wanted and what he proceeded to bring about by negotiating a treaty for the annexation of Texas and laying it before the Senate for ratification. But that body, to the great joy of the North, refused to do anything of the sort.

Whereupon the question of Texas became the main campaign issue of 1844. In order to pacify the Northerners somewhat, the Democrats—Tyler's own party—promised, if victorious, to re-open Oregon to American settlement and so balance a non-slavery territory against one so surely pro-slavery as Texas. Then, right in the midst of this planning and bitter controversy, the Democrats turned

their backs on John Tyler and nominated James K. Polk who promised to do what his party demanded. Whereupon Polk was elected, Congress at once passed a resolution admitting Texas, and the last thing John Tyler did as president was to sign that resolution—thus adding another slave state to the Union.

For fourteen years after that, Tyler lived as a private citizen. It speaks well for his judgment that, during these years, his advice and often his power as a speaker were sought far and wide. At the end of that time, when civil war loomed dark over the country, he again came actively into leadership. At first, he was opposed to the Southern states' seceding. In fact, he worked hard to help assemble the peace conference held at Washington in February, 1861, over which he presided, and used his influence to bring about a peaceable settlement between the North and the South.

Shortly after that convention, however, he saw that a break was inevitable and came out strongly for secession while serving as a member of the Virginia Convention, meeting at Richmond. He stayed on in that convention until he was sent to the provisional Confederate Congress in May, 1861. Later, he was elected a member of the permanent Confederate Congress, but, before he could take his seat, death came in January, 1862.

For over half a century his grave was left unmarked by the United States. In 1915, however, the government erected a monument on the spot as a recognition of his long public service. And it was the first monument to be voted by the Union to a man whose beliefs led him to side against that Union in the struggle between it and the South.

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Chapter V

NEW LANDS

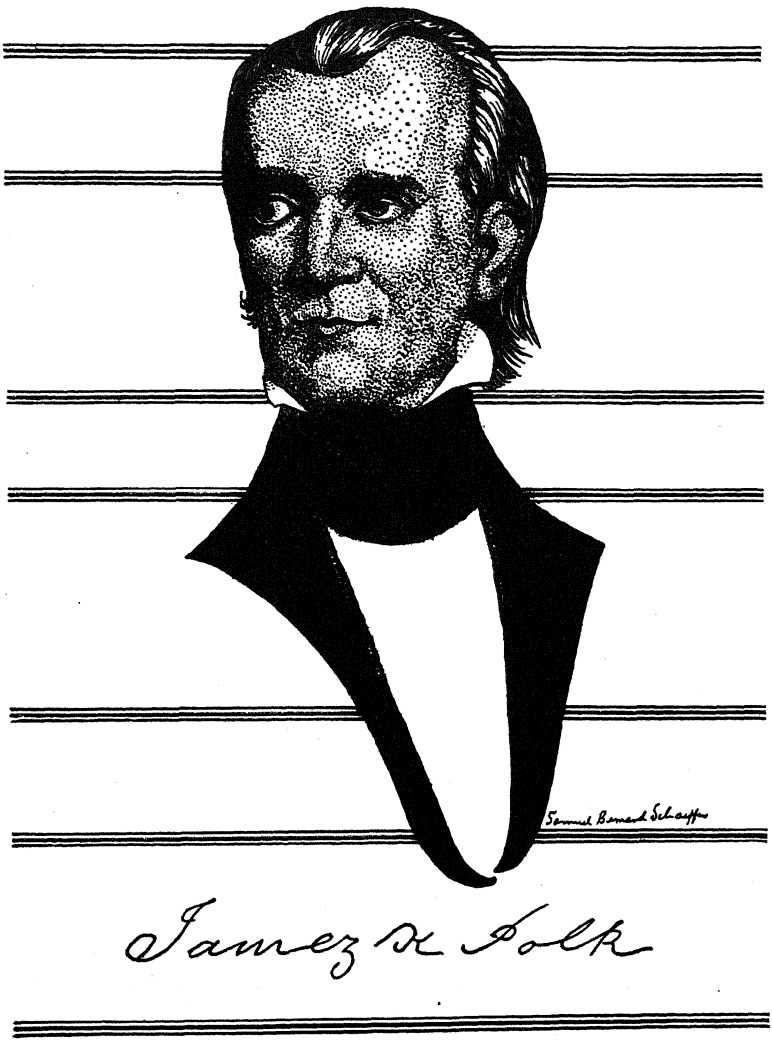
I. JAMES KNOX POLK

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Now if the new president, James K. Polk, had ended the trouble with the annexation of Texas, what a different story America might have unfolded. To be sure, that state added another to those already defending their rights to hold slaves. That one fact alone promised plenty of trouble. Still, Texas was down in the section where slavery had always existed and so her admission as a slave state, although objectionable to the North, was not likely to cause any lasting trouble.

What would cause trouble, and serious trouble at that, would be any attempt to push the slave line farther north into new territory. However, that possibility seemed distant with the Missouri Compromise of 1820 fixing the dividing line at the northern boundary of that state. And until President Polk arrived to take the president's chair, any possibility of trouble growing out of new southern territory had seemed equally distant. But when his administration added 500,000 square miles to the south and the west—well, all sorts of slavery complications were bound to arise.

Who was this new president? Was he equally in sympathy with North and with South? Was he capable of setting straight all the difficulties he pulled down on the heads of his countrymen?


Samuel Bernard Schaffer
James K. Polk

If nationality, family, and training counted in making him capable, he should have measured high in power. To begin with he was of Scotch-Irish blood. Further, he was descended from that sturdy group of Scotch-Irish who had found their way through the wilderness, even before the days of the Revolution, to settle along the Carolina frontier. In that group none was more vigorous, more thrifty than Samuel Polk, the father of James; none thought more clearly, or kept more closely to her Presbyterian faith than Jane Knox Polk, the mother of James.

And so the boy, one of nine brothers and sisters, began life with all the advantages, as well as all the disadvantages, offered by life along the southwestern frontier. What is more, he began it in 1795, just as Washington, beyond the mountains, was getting the wheels of the new American republic to running safely, and even this far-off Scotch Presbyterian group watched intently, discussed freely the way those wheels moved. When James was eleven, his father and some of the Carolina neighbors crossed the mountains into Tennessee to fell trees, break ground, and start a new settlement. Again, although there was a vast wilderness of country lying between that settlement and the Atlantic sea coast, news of the young nation's affairs of government somehow traveled over the mountains to that tiny cluster of cabins in Tennessee. Men and women, full of the live interest of pioneer days, seized on that news and talked it over early and late. Hot discussions were held. Conclusions were reached. And young James Polk heard them all—heard and began right then and there to be a stalwart defender of Thomas Jefferson's principles.

Probably, he thought more about such things because he was rather frail and therefore not out in the rough and tumble of frontier life as much as his stronger brothers

and sisters. Neither was he able to work as much on the farm which, under his father's thrifty management, began to yield almost at once. But he was quite strong enough to take advantage of all the schooling offered in that pioneer section. After getting what he could there, he was sent to Columbia Academy for a year, then to Murfreesboro for a short time, and finally he entered the University of Tennessee for a straight four years' course.

Since learning was never very easy for James Polk, his college years were filled with hard work—not only hard work but honest, thorough work, as well. That is why he graduated at the head of his class in mathematics and classics. After that he studied law for two years, was admitted to the bar, and began his law practice in the city of Columbia.

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JAMES POLK had been attending strictly to his law practice for three years when the Democrats of his county sought him out and elected him to the Tennessee Legislature. Two years later he was sent to Washington to serve in Congress. He stayed there for fourteen straight years, industrious, quick in debate, and presided, for two sessions, as Speaker of the House.

That was the time—from 1825 to 1839—when Andrew Jackson was stampeding not only Washington, but the whole country with his defense of popular sovereignty, his dramatic campaigns, and his very new, very startling presidential policies. Quite naturally, James Polk, straight from Jackson's own frontier border, elected by Tennessee's own particular party of Jacksonian Democrats, supported his tall, vigorous state leader in the fight for the presidency. He went right on loyally supporting that leader's administra-

tions. Then when the tide of public approval turned against Martin Van Buren, Tennessee elected James Polk governor, and he left Washington to go back to be Democratic leader, himself, in his own state. What is more, even though he was defeated for governor twice after that, he still retained unquestionable leadership in his party.

That leadership explains his appearance at the Democratic National Convention of 1844 as possible candidate for vice-president. It also explains, somewhat, why that convention, wearied by a stubborn deadlock, suddenly, joyfully, nominated him for president when somebody suggested he would be a safe leader. Then and there, James K. Polk became the first dark-horse candidate for president.

And he was a dark horse in the full meaning of the term. The country scarcely knew who he was or what he had done. His own party knew him more for a man who kept his political pledges than for one of any particular brilliancy. On the other hand, his opponent, Henry Clay, was known the country over as a vigorous, vivid, successful leader in many a political fight. But, fortunately for Polk and his party, Henry Clay wabbled throughout all of his campaign, promising first one thing, then another, until nobody could be sure where he stood. Still more fortunately for the Democrat candidate, the Whigs split over the annexation of Texas—and votes were turned to Polk because he stood firmly for that annexation.

As a result, the country pinned its faith to the small, rather colorless, long-haired man from Tennessee, who, even if he did seem to lack vision and daring, was steady and cautious, and so James Polk was elected president—elected on his promise to annex Texas and the campaign cry of "Fifty-four-forty or fight"—a cry growing out of

the dispute with Great Britain over the northwest boundary line. Since the bill for the admission of Texas had been signed by John Tyler as his last presidential act, that part of Polk's campaign promise was taken care of before he took the president's chair.

But now that Texas was a part of the Union, up came a boundary question relating to her southern border. So there was James Polk looking forth from the Capitol at Washington on a land wrought up to a frenzy over boundary disputes to north and to south while, in between, it seethed with excitement over the slavery question from border to border. What could such a man do in so difficult a situation?

To begin with, he could work because he knew how and always had. So he began and kept on day after day without stopping for any sort of play, or even any real social life at the White House. By that work, the northwest boundary was settled, even though it had to be settled by compromise at the forty-ninth parallel instead of the fifty-four-forty line so loudly claimed in the Polk-Clay campaign; tariff was reduced on the principle of tariff for revenue only; an independent treasury system was established.

And a war with Mexico was fought to settle the Texan boundary line. Mexico claimed that boundary was made by the Neuces River; the United States fixed it by the Rio Grande. President Polk decided to defend the claim of his people and to that end ordered General Zachary Taylor, then in Texas with four thousand men, to cross the Neuces River, and proceed towards the Rio Grande. The Mexican government, on its part, resenting what it felt was an invasion of its lawful territory, attacked and defeated a detachment of the American forces. Immediately, on the news reaching Washington, President Polk loudly proclaimed to Congress that,

"Mexico has shed blood upon American soil. War exists, and exists by the act of Mexico herself."

In answer, Congress at once made a formal declaration of war with Mexico. Certainly that war was not one of which America could ever be proud so far as the real cause is concerned. But it was a war from which she certainly can claim many brilliant victories won by a small American army over an enemy usually exceeding in numbers. And a war which, after two years of hard, swift fighting, added to the territory of the United States all of what is now Texas, New Mexico, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and the part of Colorado and Wyoming not included before in the purchase of Louisiana.

All in all, James K. Polk, therefore, as said above, added 500,000 square miles to his people's possessions through his expansion policies; he signed the Walker Tariff Bill and thus caused his country to prosper under what came near to being a system of free trade; and the handling of public moneys was assured greater safety through his favoring the subtreasury system.

But what with the discovery of gold in California and that state's demanding admission as a free state, the question of slavery in new territory had increased until it towered over all others in the election of 1848. Since James Polk was a Southerner—a slave owner, in fact—he was looked upon as working for Southern interests as against those of the whole Union. That and other accusations left him no chance for reelection.

After his one term, therefore, he went home. For the first time in his life he was now free to rest. But he did not

know how. He had never played in all of his hard-working life. Before he even had time to find out whether he could let go, relax, and find enjoyment in his new leisure, he was taken ill and died rather suddenly, in June, 1849 only a few months after leaving the White House.

II. ZACHARY TAYLOR AND MILLARD FILLMORE

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CERTAINLY the close of James K. Polk's administration found the United States in a turmoil from border to border. Instead of rejoicing over the vast new lands just gained from Mexico, they staggered in dismay over the burden of responsibility which those lands threatened to bring. To make matters worse, political leaders, instead of facing that responsibility with sober and steady planning, were grasping wildly here and there for any sort of a popular banner to lead them to victory. In the midst of all the confusion, the Whigs were quick-witted enough to set Zachary Taylor —Old Rough and Ready—hero of Mexican battles, at the head of their ticket.

Now, if General Taylor had had General Washington's sense of responsibility for possessions won through victorious battles, the people of the United States might have sat back and taken a long deep breath of relief when the Whig ticket won. But so far as any one knew, Old Rough and Ready had no such feeling at all. It was his place to win battles and he won them gloriously one after another. After that—well there was the government at Washington to take up the work where he left off. Would he have assumed the burden of that follow-up if he had been in Washington's place in the days before there was any well-established government? Could he do it now? After his long years of a soldier's life, could he serve as a statesman? Was there anything in his whole make-up to keep him from blundering hopelessly in the president's chair?

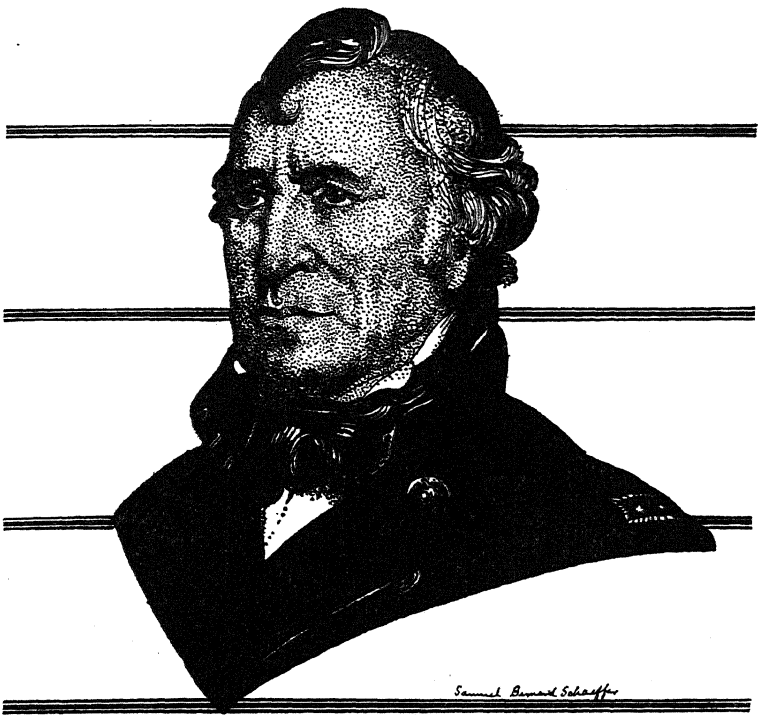
Well, above all else, Zachary Taylor was honest—directly, abruptly honest. Besides that he had the ability to learn quickly and to act on what he had learned with

breath-taking swiftness. To be sure, he had plenty to learn in the political game, for, because of his unsettled life at army posts, he had never even voted in his whole life. In forming or working out political policies, he was as ignorant as a child.

The reason for all this was that Zachary Taylor was first, last, and always a soldier. Even as a small boy he had dreamed of being nothing else. No doubt that was because his own father had fought shoulder to shoulder with General Washington in the American War for Independence. To be sure, there were also the Lees, the Madisons, the Monroes—all relatives of his. No doubt he inherited from them the outward manners, the reserve, the ability to meet people rather easily, which came to his aid in the years of his presidency.

Zachary Taylor began life in Orange County, Virginia, in 1784, when George Washington was squaring his shoulders under the responsibilities growing out of his own victorious leadership. Those were the days also when magic tales of Kentucky were being brought over the mountains. The Taylors and their neighbors listened eagerly to those tales, then like others, packed their few household belongings and were off to try life in that far-famed hunting ground.

Any boy living in Kentucky in those days learned early how to use a rifle—and then did use it not only in hunting but in defending himself, as well as his home, from the savage tribes who never ceased to resent the White Man's invasion of their loved Kentucky. Long trails to salt licks, long nights and days hunting and fishing out under the open sky, long hours of swimming the Ohio from bank to bank—all served to give Zachary Taylor a body like iron and a mind like lightning in its swift thinking.



Zachary Taylor

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And all this time Zachary Taylor kept right on dreaming of what he could and would do later on as a soldier. When he was twenty-two he had his first chance to try out his dreams by going down to the Southwest to help settle the trouble connected with Aaron Burr's conspiracy. Then, through the influence of James Madison, President Jefferson gave the young Kentuckian his first commission, and he was off at last on a military career which was to last forty years.

That career included service with General Harrison out in the Northwest; twenty years of army-post life including, in 1832, an expedition against Chief Black Hawk; three years of fighting against the Seminoles in Florida; and command of a department with headquarters at Baton Rouge, before he was sent into Texas in 1845, to protect America's claims in that territory, and to be ready to answer President Polk's command to march with his small force down to the Rio Grande.

And by so doing to make it possible for the Congress of the United States to declare war with Mexico. No sooner was that war declared than Taylor proceeded to win one victory after another—Pala Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey. He also won the rank of major general for himself. Then, Congress having sent Major General Scott, commander-in-chief of the United States army, to Mexico, Taylor's troops were divided—part to sail back to the United States, the rest to march into northern Texas under his own command. Naturally, General Taylor was angry. But he was also helpless and so started north as commanded. That was when, upon hearing that General Santa Anna with his Mexican army of twenty thousand

men was advancing, he—Zachary Taylor—with five thousand men, boldly went to meet him, and won another victory.

He also added, by that victory, more glory to that already surrounding his name in the North. And so, only increased his value to political leaders, for, some time earlier, the Whigs having decided to take advantage of the victorious general's popularity had begun a very skillfully directed correspondence with Zachary Taylor concerning his country's need of him in the president's chair. Very reluctant at first, he finally yielded to the clever persuasion of the Whigs. His campaign was a noisy one, full of cheers and many very bright, very proudly waving flags. In the end, with the loud shouting still going on, he suddenly found himself facing a nation wanting to know what was to be done with the southwest land which he had so valiantly fought to win.

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As we have said, no man ever became president of the United States with less knowledge of what lay before him than Zachary Taylor. For example, there was the never-sleeping slavery trouble. What could he do when he, himself, was owner of a slave plantation near Baton Rouge? What could he do as father-in-law of Jefferson Davis, then a United States senator, and later to become president of the Southern Confederacy? Of course, he believed that the South was right, that the North was bitterly pushing the slavery question against all of the best Southern interests. Yet, being Zachary Taylor, and having accepted the presidency of both the North and the South, he was far too fair and too honest to favor one above the other. What did he do?

To begin with, in his ignorance of all party manipulations, he thought he would just not take sides with any party—North or South. He would, on the other hand, stand aside while Congress passed or refused to pass bills. When bills became laws—that was his time to step into action by seeing that those laws were executed. But Zachary Taylor had not been at the head of the United States government very long before he decided he could not and would not step aside for anything or anybody if, by so doing, he failed in his own duty as leader. Perhaps Millard Fillmore, his vice-president, helped him to see this. It is certain that William H. Seward, clever Whig anti-slavery leader and New York Senator, helped to make him see and feel his own power.

However, no matter how he came to make up his mind when it once was made he struck straight from the shoulder with swiftness and force. He sent word to California and New Mexico advising those territories to draw up their state constitutions; then he announced to Congress that California had asked for admission as a free state. Immediately the whole South was in an uproar. And Henry Clay, to quiet that uproar, proposed the Compromise of 1850, which, with its many propositions, instead of doing anything of the sort only transferred the center of the fight to Congress.

In the meantime, President Taylor had just begun to manage the whole difficult situation in a way to give heart to the great rank and file of American citizens when he was taken suddenly ill and died on July 4, 1850. What he might have done, therefore, for the future welfare of the new lands—no one can measure. Certainly, however, America can take pride in the way he stood up in his full strength to assume his responsibility for those lands when

once he grasped all such responsibility meant to the American people.

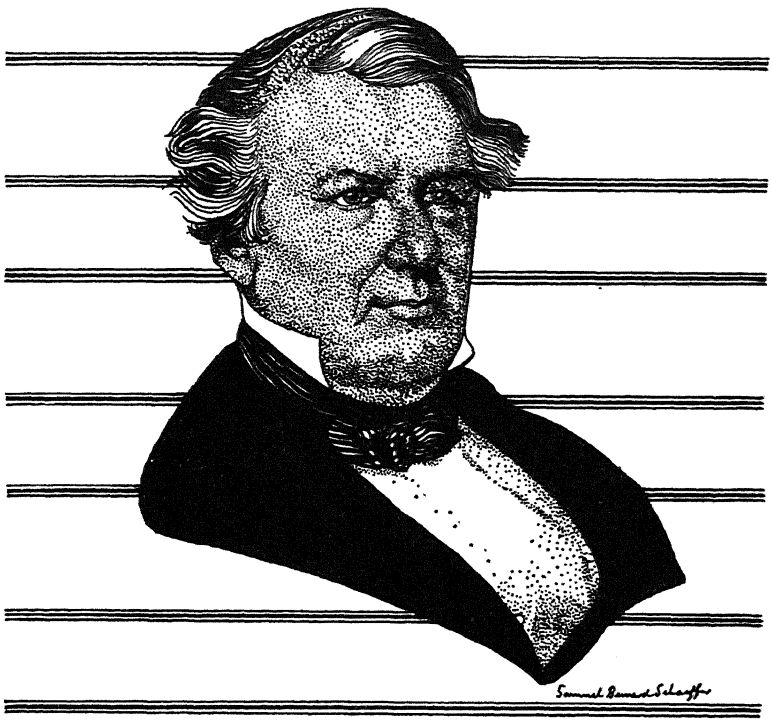
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And now Millard Fillmore stepped forth from the vice-presidency to assume that responsibility, Millard Fillmore born in a log cabin out in the pioneer country of western New York just fifty years before he took his oath of office as president.

With the sturdy backbone so often found among the boys of that early frontier life, Millard went to school three months of the year, served as apprentice to a wool carder for five years, and, in one way and another, pulled himself up to the place where he, at nineteen, began to study law. For four years he worked for his board while studying—and then was admitted to the bar to build up a remarkably solid practice and to become known far and wide as a man of high honor.

Also to become known to the New York Whig party and to be sent by that party to the state legislature from Erie County in 1828. He served so well there that, in 1832, he was elected to the United States House of Representatives and reelected four times. That brought him to his nomination for governor of New York in 1844; also to his first big defeat in the election that followed. However, he still kept the confidence of his party for he was made comptroller of New York in 1847 and a year later was elected vice-president on the Whig ticket headed by General Taylor.

Which election also placed him in the presidency after the death of Zachary Taylor in 1850. He brought to that difficult time all of his ability as a successful lawyer, all of the assurance of a clean record as both citizen and


Millard Fillmore

political leader, all the vision of an honest, capable statesman. And he stood the test of his administration with honor.

But, because he signed and tried to enforce the fugitive slave law—one of the propositions of Clay's Compromise Bill—he became very unpopular among his own northern supporters. In consequence, he had no chance to succeed himself. Later, in 1856, his name came up again, presented by the American party, but he received only one electoral vote—that of Maryland.

He spent his last years in Buffalo where he had begun his law career and from where he had gone to all his public positions. Evidently his early years of hardy endurance served him well for he lived on to die of old age, twenty-four years after his inauguration as president.

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Chapter VI

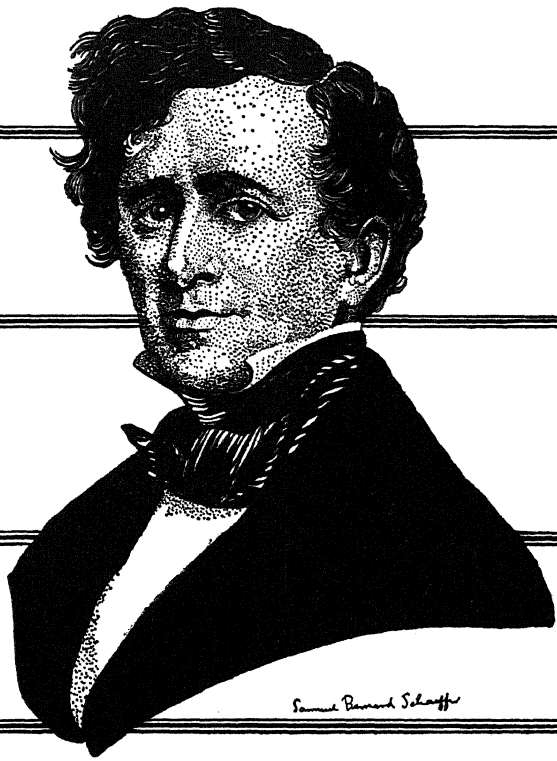
A NATION DIVIDED

I. FRANKLIN PIERCE

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And now into the fight over the extension of slavery in the new territory rode another dark horse—Franklin Pierce—who was to bring even greater confusion to an already bewildered and floundering people. For Franklin Pierce was a man from the North, from the old rock-ribbed New England North, who was to favor the South throughout his whole administration. If he had been a colorless man, if he had been an inexperienced one, his influence might not have been so upsetting. Instead, he had a vivid personality, he was a powerful speaker, and he knew the game of politics from the start through to the finish.

Perhaps if he had not been just who he was—the son of General Benjamin Pierce of New Hampshire—the country might not have found it quite so hard to adjust itself to his Southern sympathies. But General Pierce and his whole family were Northerners and had been even long before the General himself fought with that scant handful of fearless Concord and Lexington men in America's first battle for liberty. Beginning with that world-famous charge across a village green, General Pierce had never stopped fighting through seven years—or until final victory was won. Then, like so many others in those first important years following the revolution,



Franklin Pierce

he took up the burden of responsibility for governing the possessions the war had won—for governing them according to the principle of equal opportunity for every man living within those possessions. To that end he served twelve years in the New Hampshire Legislature and then one term as governor of that state.

Of course as the son of such a father, Franklin Pierce, born in 1804, grew up hearing state and national affairs discussed long and often. At sixteen, he went to Bowdoin College—to meet Nathaniel Hawthorne and make him his close, loyal and lifelong friend; to win just a fair record as a scholar but a high one as a handsome, well-mannered, agreeable youth. Graduating at twenty, he studied law and then began to practice in the village of Hillsborough where he had been born, and where he and his family were so well known.

Those were the years when his father was serving as governor and then running for reelection. They were also the years when Andrew Jackson was striding up and down the land gathering followers under his banner of the newer democracy. Franklin Pierce, like many another live young American attracted by the Jacksonian doctrine, took his stand under that banner.

And that banner led him, first, to his own state legislature where his own ability to lead placed him in the speaker's chair for the last two of his four years' term. After that it led him to the National House of Representatives and from there to the Senate, where he arrived as the youngest member of that chamber. What with his youth, what with Calhoun, Clay, and Webster thundering forth their powerful oratory, Franklin Pierce was almost lost. Almost but not quite, for he did attract a little attention through his own power to speak forcibly as well as

by his ability to work hard and persistently. Nevertheless, he appears not to have cared for his position there as he resigned to return to his own law practice.

Also, he appears to have made up his mind to stay with his practice. For when his state wanted him to run for governor, he said "No." He said the same thing when another opportunity was offered him to go back to the United States Senate. Still further, he even refused to be United States attorney-general when President Polk approached him about that position. But when he was asked to take over the office of Federal district attorney he did so; no doubt because the work of that office helped him in his own law practice.

After about five years, the steady progress of his practice was upset by the war with Mexico. Of course the son of such a staunch old patriot as Benjamin Pierce would do just what Franklin Pierce did—throw aside everything else to fight for his country. At first he enlisted as a volunteer private. Very shortly afterwards he was made colonel of a regiment, and then, still later, brigadier general of volunteers.

As one of General Winfield Scott's command, he landed in Mexico in the summer of 1847, and took part in the march on Mexico City. Although badly hurt by falling from his horse at the Battle of Contreras, he went back into line the next day at Churubusco—only to fall again and that time to be unconscious for hours on the battlefield. Despite all of that, he remained with the army until the war ended.

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On coming back to New Hampshire he presided over the convention assembled to revise his state's constitution.

He was, therefore, just beginning to come back into the political game when the bitter fight at the close of the Taylor-Fillmore administration brought the Democratic convention to a deadlock over a nomination. But he had not come far enough back into public life to be well known, for when the name of Franklin Pierce came forth to break that deadlock, very few in the whole convention had much of an idea who he was or what he could do. The Whigs having gone forth to the victory four years before under the leadership of General Taylor, now tried another hero of the same war—General Winfield Scott—Franklin Pierce's old commander-in-chief whom the whole country knew. What hope could the Democrats have to win by choosing a New Hampshire dark horse to run against such a nationally famous soldier?

Well, to begin with, the Whigs had just had their chance with General Taylor, and the country was asking itself, what they had done with it. Had not the tangle over the new Southwest grown worse instead of better? On the other hand the Democratic candidate—Franklin Pierce—certainly offered new possibilities over which to ponder. Taylor and Polk had both been slave owners from the South. Here was a man from the far North—but also a man whom Virginia—not New Hampshire, his own state, had sponsored for president at the convention, and whom now the whole Southern Democratic party was ready to support. Could he—in this curiously new position—swing both North and South? Perhaps he could.

And, of course, he did. So Franklin Pierce was elected. Straightway he chose his entire cabinet from Eastern and Southern leaders. And what is more he kept that cabinet straight on through his four years without one resignation breaking its combined force. His choice of cabinet members

gave the whole country to understand at once that the new president was not going to stand for the North's anti-slavery principles; it also told that country he was not even going to stand neutral. On the other hand, President Pierce meant, undoubtedly, to favor the South and its slavery policies.

Of course the country should have known that. Not only had he been elected by the South, but before that he had shown where he stood by favoring the Compromise of 1850—that compromise of so many conflicting slavery clauses. Now, as president, he supported the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, the pet bill of Stephen A. Douglas, Senator from Illinois, which proposed to admit states organized from the Louisiana Purchase "with or without slavery as their constitution may prescribe at the time." The bill became a law. Now the government faced not only the Compromise of 1850 allowing the new Southwest to become states either slave or free; but it also faced the same proposition up in the older Northwest which, since 1820, had been protected by the Missouri Compromise against all such possibility.

With the slavery boundary line blown to nothing out in the Western states, bands of adventurers from Missouri —self-named Sons of the South—went flocking across the border into Kansas to seize and hold land for Southern slave owners. At the same time settlers from the North—many from far-off New England—came sweeping into the same territory to take land for themselves. At once the two invading groups flew at each other's throats, and right then and there the first blood was shed in the struggle which later was to grow into civil war.

In the meantime, with all of this oncoming disaster filling his eyes and his ears, Franklin Pierce was having to

turn some attention to foreign affairs. For example, there was the Gadsden Purchase under negotiation. This was finally completed, thereby adding 45,535 square miles of Mexican territory to that already acquired in the southwest. Also there was Commander Perry working over in Japan to open Japanese ports to American trade—and succeeding in his efforts by the treaty of 1854. Still further, the United States consular service was reorganized, a court of claims was set up, and greater protection was established for foreigners who were working to become American citizens.

But to offset the fair fame these achievements in foreign affairs brought the United States, there was the disgraceful Ostend Manifesto. This was a very high-handed plan of the United States ministers to Great Britain, France, and Spain, who met at Ostend, Belgium, and proposed to annex Cuba—through purchase from Spain if possible but if not that way, then, by force. When the news of this reached America, the country sent up a loud cry of disapproval. President Pierce and his Congress, on their side, claimed that they knew nothing and had known nothing at any time about the Ostend proceedings. They also claimed that they knew nothing of an equally high-handed attempt by William Walker to seize Nicaragua and set up a new government there.

With all these disturbing affairs at home and abroad to upset public welfare and national standing, Franklin Pierce came to the close of his administration. And even though still in the prime of life, to the close, as well, of all public service. To be sure, he was a candidate for renomination but he failed to receive the sanction of his party. Four years later, he was asked again to let his name be presented, but he refused. However, with his very attractive person-

ality he had no trouble in filling the remaining years of his life with interest. And so he, as far as active leadership went, stood to one side all through the Civil War, as well as through some of the troublesome years following that war. He traveled widely with Nathaniel Hawthorne. He entertained his friends delightfully at Concord. And so he lived genially, pleasantly until his death in 1869.

II. JAMES BUCHANAN

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WITH the nation already beginning to split under their very feet, political parties of 1856 grasped hither and yon for a leader. In the midst of the uproar the Democrats clutched James Buchanan. Perhaps they did as well as any group could have done at the time. Kansas was already being ripped from border to border by actual war. Every day the North was growing more bitter in its attacks on the South. Every day the South was growing more and more outraged over the North's interference with what a Southerner considered was none of a Northerner's business. Was James Buchanan a man who could please both North and South? Could he straighten out the Kansas tangle? Could he, in fact, perform the miracle of saving a Union divided against itself? Who was James Buchanan anyhow to be so chosen?

To begin with, he was a Pennsylvanian, of good, staunch, unyielding Scotch-Irish Presbyterian blood. His father was a kind man, a sincere friend, and one with very high ideals of honesty. Of his mother, he himself says,

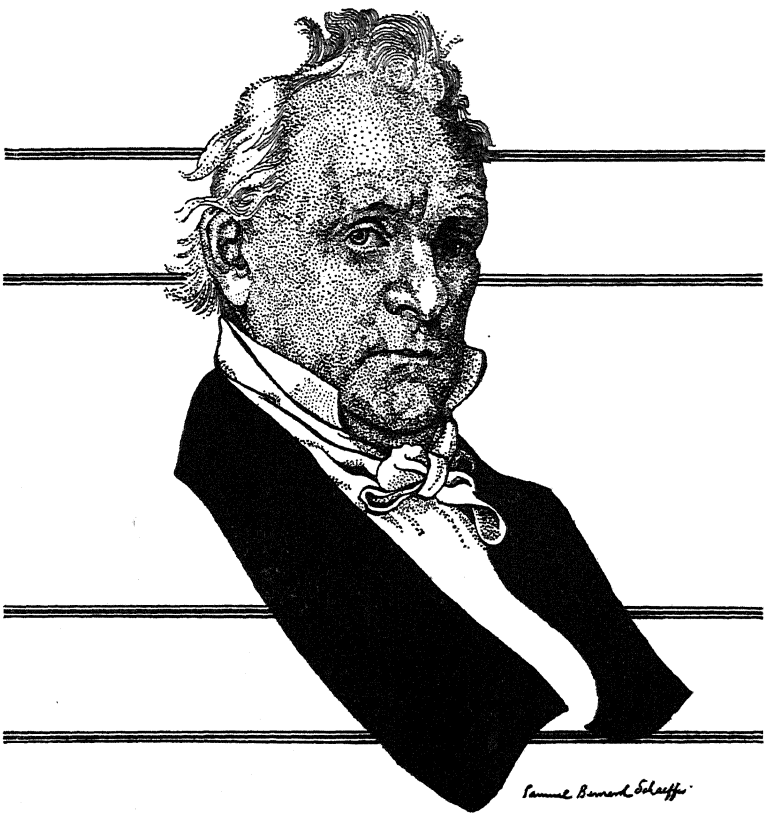
> "Under Providence, I attribute any little distinction which I may have acquired in the world to the blessing which He conferred upon me in granting me such a mother."

Added to that high inheritance of good blood and honest ideals, James Buchanan had also the advantage of having been born away back in 1791, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. That meant that he had grown up hearing men and women talk with great pride of all that they and their neighbors had done and still meant to do to make their national dreams of good, clean government come true.

With all of that back of him, James Buchanan entered college to break rules right and left, to waste his time, and to have the college authorities write his father at the end of the first year, asking that he be not sent back. Upon receiving this letter, James's father simply handed it over to his son and left the room without saying a word. Something in the way he left told James more effectively than words how deeply his father was hurt. And the boy cared. So he hurried off to the family pastor to ask him to intercede with the college for another chance. The pastor did so, James went back, stayed by his work through his remaining three years and graduated from Dickinson College in 1809 with a good record in conduct and a high rank in his class.

After that, came three more years for the study of law followed by admittance to the bar in the year of James Madison's declaration of the War of 1812. James Buchanan was then twenty-one and very much opposed in his young mind to his country's plunging into another war with Great Britain. However, when fighting had to be, he enlisted as a private and helped in defending Baltimore.

That done, he went back to his own profession fully expecting to attend to his own private affairs for the rest of his life. But he became engaged to an attractive young girl and had a slight quarrel with her just before she went away for a visit. She took suddenly ill while gone, and—before the quarrel could be adjusted—died. James Buchanan, loving her with all of his very sensitive, loyal nature, was broken-hearted. In trying to forget his suffering he plunged into public life. But he never did forget and he never married. Later on he asked a niece to share his home and the social honors that came his way with the years. In turn he devoted himself to her welfare up to the last day of his long life.



James Buchanan

2

JAMES BUCHANAN was only twenty-three when he began his political life by being sent to the Pennsylvania legislature. Seven years later he went to the United States Senate where he stayed for ten years. In the meantime he had left the Federalist party to join the Jackson-Van Buren Democrats, which change in party affiliation no doubt brought him his appointment as minister to St. Petersburg from President Jackson. He accepted the appointment and negotiated a very important commercial treaty which was kept in force for eighty years. A year after his return from Russia, he again entered the United States Senate to remain nine years.

As early as 1844, he was Pennsylvania's choice for president, but in the deadlock of the convention he withdrew to turn his votes over to James K. Polk. In turn President Polk made James Buchanan Secretary of State to serve through the troubled years of the annexation of Texas, the Mexican War, and the settlement of the Oregon boundary question with Great Britain.

At the end of Polk's administration, Buchanan returned to private life for four years. After that President Pierce asked him to go as minister to Great Britain. Again he left his own plans, only to find himself, later, in a very unfavorable limelight through his work in the Ostend Manifesto.

And right then, even with the United States protesting loudly over that manifesto, the Democratic party rewarded James Buchanan by placing his name at the head of its national ticket in the campaign covering the last months of President Pierce's administration. To be sure, to offset his unpopularity over that Ostend affair, there was his long and faithful public service at home and abroad, plus

the fact that he had always favored the interests of the Southern slave owners. For those two reasons he was elected. And the United States faced another four years under a president born and bred in the North but whose political loyalty led him to sympathize with the South.

Distracted as he must have been by the struggle at home, President Buchanan, with his long years as foreign diplomat behind him, was too keenly interested in international relations to forget them now. A controversy over Great Britain's Central American policy was settled by a treaty with that nation, Nicaragua, and Honduras. In addition, the Buchanan administration, right in the face of nation-wide frowning on the Ostend Manifesto, kept on struggling to annex Cuba, and even to add parts of Central America and possibly Mexico.

In the meantime, at home, the rift continued to widen between North and South. Into that rift the Supreme Court threw the Dred Scott decision. The North, understanding that decision to mean that Congress had no power to compromise on slavery in the territories, refused to accept it. Senator Stephen A. Douglas, long-favored son of Illinois and advocate of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill with its doctrine of state's rights, came up for reelection to the Senate in 1858. Abraham Lincoln stepped forth to oppose him. Straightway Illinois became the center of the whole nation's slavery debate, with Douglas arguing for popular sovereignty and Lincoln against anything, everything that threatened the power of the Union. John Brown, from Kansas, marched out with nineteen followers "to free the slaves in the South"—to be hanged as a traitor, and to rouse a furor of shouting both for and against his dream.

And where was President Buchanan while all of this was going on? He was chiefly busy with Kansas which

continued to seethe over its admittance to the Union as free or slave. For a time he held that the people of Kansas should decide that matter for themselves. Later, he used all of his presidential influence to force those people to accept the Lecompton Constitution which only permitted the Kansans to say how many slaves they would accept—but which gave them no chance at all to say that they wanted none.

This change of the President with regard to the Kansas slavery question is thought now to have been brought about by his cabinet. But that same unsettled, apparently confused state of mind was even more evident in his message to Congress in December, 1860. If ever the government of the United States needed a strong decided voice it was then. Instead of meeting that need, however, President Buchanan said with one breath that no state had a right to secede; with the next, he stated that the government had no right to prevent secession; with the third, he announced that it was his duty as president to call out the army and navy to protect all government property and to enforce all federal laws.

In addition, throughout all of those feverish days, he was using every effort to stop all public talk and writing against slavery. As a result of all this changing about, nobody really knew where President Buchanan stood on the slavery question. His cabinet members from the South resigned because they thought he was not really with them in their fight to retain slaves. On the other hand Northern leaders were quite equally sure they could not claim his support. His leadership, therefore, meant nothing to either side and worse than nothing in closing that gulf widening dangerously between the two sections. Is it any wonder then, that the closing months of his administration found

South Carolina adopting an ordinance "to dissolve the Union"? Is it any wonder that within sixty days six other Southern states had joined South Carolina?

What force could such a president have in the peace efforts that followed? Could any president have done any more now that the final break had come—especially since that president was only marking time until he could leave Washington and the whole disastrous situation behind him to be handled by his successor—Abraham Lincoln.

Today, in looking back over James Buchanan's presidency, men have come to agree that the mistakes he made were so emphasized by the bitterness then raging that no one can really measure their importance. For the same reason any constructive work he may have attempted could not have had the support it deserved. And still further, today, clear-seeing leaders have concluded that James Buchanan was in reality an honest patriot but one who saw all sides of a question without having the power to choose where and when to lead out forcibly for any one side.

If all that is true of James Buchanan, he must have had some satisfaction in living on quietly to see other leaders bring his government safely through the Civil War and set it going on its way again free from all destructive conflict. Those years, up to his death in 1868, he spent at his home in Wheatland, Pennsylvania.

Chapter VII

WELDING

I. ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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THEN, to the great glory and honor of the American people, Abraham Lincoln strode forth from the wind-swept prairie of Illinois. Once, years before, when standing in the sunny market place of old New Orleans, he had seen a slave girl auctioned off like a beast of burden. Then and there, with his young blood growing hot with pity, he had vowed:

> "If ever I get a chance to hit that thing, I'll hit it hard."

Years later he was to see "that thing" heave its ugly self high between the North and the South and was then to cry out in warning:

> "'A house divided against itself shall fall.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the house to fall, but I expect it will cease to be divided. It will become one thing or the other."

Now, in 1861, seasoned in body, in mind, and in soul by years of life out in the sunshine and storm of his own prairie land, he faced his chance to make good that long-ago vow. He faced, also, the chance to make good his prophecy concerning the "house divided." If he kept his vow he

must make that house "all free" to save it from falling. Could he—would he keep it? Well, he was the same man who once said:

> "Be sure you put your feet in the right place and then stand firm."

Still further, no one had ever known Abraham Lincoln to step aside, step around, or step back when he had once set his feet in a place.

To a nation left tottering after Buchanan, after Pierce—yes, and after many another before those two—that tall, lank, awkward man, swinging his way toward the White House and the president's chair must have promised something of welcome steadiness. That nation knew he had fought many a battle. Sometimes he had won. Sometimes he had lost. But whether he won or lost, he stuck to his colors. And all the time—winning or losing—he kept right on telling his jokes, right on playing fair, right on being human with a heart that could pity and a mind that could understand. If the nation swaying to a fall needed the firmness Abraham Lincoln promised, it needed just as much all of his keen sense of humor, all of his fine merciful kindness to make that firmness count fully to the great good of the Union.

2

WHAT was there of blood and training in Abraham Lincoln's make-up to have brought him that fine balance of a merciful heart and a will of relentless power?

About all that can be said of the Lincoln family is that they all, root and branch, loved above everything else the freedom of the great out-of-doors to be found only in a new unbroken wilderness. Landing in Massachusetts away



A. Lincoln

back in 1637, the family had pushed down into New Jersey, over into Pennsylvania, then across to Virginia, and from there into Kentucky where Abraham's own grandfather was killed by the Indians while peaceably clearing his new fields.

And that left Abraham's father, Thomas Lincoln, a little fellow of six, to find his own way in life as best he could. He did that by wandering from settlement to settlement, working at any job on farm or in shop that offered itself. He went on by becoming a carpenter. All of which left him no time to learn much of anything else except to write his own name. And none of which, not even the lack of education, was anything unusual in the lives of Kentucky frontier boys.

Or with girls either for that matter, as Nancy Hanks, Abraham's mother, could have said. For her family, like that of Thomas Lincoln, had come from Virginia into Kentucky. She, like Thomas, had been left alone as a child. But she had found a home with relatives where she grew up an attractive, happy girl who learned how to keep a clean, orderly house, how to cook, how to spin—all very necessary things to know in pioneer life.

But not at all easy things to do in the tiny one-window, one-door log cabin standing near Nolin's Creek in Kentucky where Abraham Lincoln was born February 12, 1809. And where he spent his first four years blinking at the fire snapping its way into the huge old chimney, or staring out across the small fields to where the tangled forest shut down like a green wall.

Then his father had moved on about fifteen miles to Knob's Creek. Here the boy first went to school and here he also began to help plant and hoe. Years afterwards he would laugh and tell half whimsically of how he, when only

seven, had planted pumpkin seeds between hills of corn in a field lying along a steep slope, and of how later the rain had come in a rush to wash the whole top layer of soil, corn and pumpkin seed down into the ravine below.

The same year of the pumpkin-seed story, the family packed their belongings to move north across the Ohio into a new wilderness in Spencer County, Indiana. It was there, after living two years in a cabin where rain, snow, and sunshine alike swept through the one unprotected opening, that Abraham Lincoln's mother died. It was from there that Thomas Lincoln traveled back to Kentucky to return with his second wife, Mrs. Sarah Johnston, who brought with her some furniture along with her own three children. Thrifty, wise, and kind, she turned the bleak cabin into a real home—a home which Lincoln recalled gratefully all his life long.

Although he was only ten when the new mother came, he was kept very busy helping on the farm. As he grew older he grew even busier. There was the plowing and planting in the spring. There was the harvesting and threshing in the summer. And always there was his ax to be used in clearing new fields, in splitting rails to fence in those fields, in hewing logs to build new cabins for new neighbors. As time passed he became a fairly good carpenter and thus helped finish many a home to the joy of some good woman who otherwise might have suffered just as his own mother had years before. After a time he began to earn as much as twenty-five cents a day! Which entire sum he immediately turned over to his father.

With all of that work filling his days, Abraham Lincoln could only go to school, as he himself says, "by littles." Perhaps, altogether, he never had more than a year of regular schooling. But how he read! Fortunately any book

was a delight to him, for books were scarce out along the frontier. But it did not seem to matter to Abraham whether the volume was *Aesop's Fables*, the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress*, or dry-as-dust *Statutes of Indiana*.

But if anyone thinks Lincoln spent his boyhood just working and reading he is sadly mistaken. There were the long winter evening neighborhood gatherings about the home fireplace. There were husking bees, spelling bees, the making of fiery speeches, and the telling of marvelous yarns to wide-eyed, breathless listeners. There was the never-ending wrestling, first with one fellow, then with another. And always there was the Ohio River with its swimming, its skating, and its boats going up and down, with time to put into shore and tell of what the world was like outside of the settlement where Abraham lived.

After a time Lincoln began to wonder why that river could not bring him some money as well as so many hours of sheer joy. With that in mind he finally managed to get an old rowboat all of his own. Shortly afterwards a couple of travelers came along who wanted to get across the Ohio. Abraham was right on hand with his old boat to row them over—and then to have his breath fairly leave his body when they gave him a whole big silver dollar for the trip.

A year later, that same river brought him his first real glimpse of life outside of his own settlement, when a trader asked him to help take a boat load of produce down to New Orleans. He was nineteen then—nineteen and standing six foot four in his homespun jeans. So with his eyes fairly bulging out of his head, he paddled away down the Ohio, down the Mississippi, seeing strange sights, strange people—and earning the unbelievable sum of eight dollars a month.

But on his return he did not have long to spin the tale of his travels to his old friends, for Thomas Lincoln had tarried in one spot just as long as he could. So, once more, in the early spring of 1830, the Lincoln family, together with a few neighbors, struck the trail north and west. This time the household belongings were packed in covered wagons, drawn by sturdy slow-going oxen. There were rivers to cross filled with melting ice. There were roads soft with mud into which the wheels sank to the hubs. There were wilderness tracks that slapped the travelers with snow-covered branches. But what of all that? Beyond lay new lands, new homes, and life was full of adventure on the way.

Those homes were found near Decatur, Illinois. There Abraham Lincoln swung his ax early and late cutting down trees, hewing them into logs for cabins or splitting them into rails to fence in the freshly cleared fields. Then he helped plow those fields and harvest the first crops. By that time life was well started in another new settlement.

3

And Abraham Lincoln was now twenty-one. If ever he meant to start out for himself it was time for him to be doing it. So he said good-by to his father's home and went forth into the world alone. He had no money; but he had strength and he knew how to work. He was leaving many of his old friends behind; but he knew how to make new ones; and he knew how to keep them. Life in those days promised a lot to Abraham Lincoln.

For a time about all he could do was to work for his food, for a place to sleep, and for barely enough to pay for the one short-sleeved, short-legged suit of jeans he had to have once a year. In the midst of this struggle, Denton Orcutt,

a trader of Sangamon county, appeared with a proposition for another trip down to New Orleans. To start on the trip one had to get to Springfield. To get to Springfield a canoe had to be made. And then after reaching Springfield, the flat-bottomed boat had to be built, which meant that Abraham's faithful ax again came into use in the felling of trees and on to the fitting in of the last stout timber before the cargo could finally be loaded, and the river journey begun.

But all the delays, all the hours of work were forgotten in the long, long days that took the boat lazily south. After those days, came a month of strange scenes in old New Orleans—among them that never-forgotten one of the slave girl cowering pitifully on the auctioneer's block.

Evidently those distracting interests did not interfere with the business success of the trip, for Orcutt was sufficiently pleased with the profits to ask Abraham Lincoln to work as a clerk in his small store at New Salem, Illinois. Now, there were gangs in those days just as today—gangs of young men under leaders whose fame rested solely on their ability to out-wrestle, out-fight not only any member of their own gang, but any new knight who might come their way. Abraham Lincoln, with his long, hard-muscled body, his power to attract and to hold people by his stories and arguments soon loomed high as such a knight. They were not slow in beginning their attacks on the new clerk. And he was not slow in taking them on—one, two, or three at a time—just as they chose. Neither was he slow in cleaning up the whole lot, cleaning them up in good rousing fights and then winning them over by his never-ending good humor.

At the same time he was winning the older people of the village by his square business dealings. As a result within

a few months he was known far and wide as Honest Abe and as the most popular young man in all New Salem. But more important than that, for the first time in his life, Abraham Lincoln could not help seeing that he had power to lead.

What could he do—what did he need most to do—to make that power grow? Apparently he, himself, concluded that he needed to improve his grammar. At once he was off six miles across country to borrow the only text on that subject existing in the whole countryside. Then he sat down—or stood up—between waiting on customers and devoured that book from lid to lid. That done, he announced that he would be a candidate for the next election to the General Assembly of Illinois. By that time, two years had passed since he had started out from his father's home—alone. He was now twenty-three.

But most unfortunately for his political campaign, that was the spring and summer of the Black Hawk War. Of course that war had to be won—so Abraham Lincoln enlisted as a private, immediately became a captain, and led his own troops off to camp. Luckily for himself, his troops, and the victories following, his command never got beyond that camp. Even so, he had trouble enough, for he knew nothing whatever of military tactics, and his men were equally ignorant. So he spent the whole summer getting out of one scrape only to plunge into another.

Then the war ended and he went back home just in time to meet defeat at the fall election. Once more he faced a winter without work and without money. But his credit was good; so he and a friend started a store of their own. That store failed. And now Lincoln not only faced life without work and without money, but with a debt of $1,100 worrying him through many a sleepless night.

To anyone except Abraham Lincoln, life certainly must have looked black. Maybe it did to him. But, as luck would have it, he had, through a trade in his store, come into possession of a barrel full of Blackstone's *Commentaries.* He found them fascinating and began to study them day and night. John Todd Stuart, a lawyer friend, gave him encouragement, and New Salem made him village postmaster. So with those two helps, plus a little money from surveying, he decided to be a lawyer. Of course there were interruptions on the way. To begin with, being Abraham Lincoln, he had to make good what he had started concerning his election to the legislature. And he did by winning his seat in that body two years after his first defeat, and by continuing to win, so that by the time he had completed his study of law, and was admitted to the bar, he had established himself fairly well as a political leader of his own district.

He was now ready to move on to Springfield to set up his own law practice there and a little later to establish a home of his own by marrying Mary Todd, a native Kentuckian, like himself, but also, like him, now a resident of Springfield.

By the time he was thirty-three, life in his own town, even in his own state, was being fairly good to Abraham Lincoln. He decided, therefore, to move on still farther and see what it might have to offer him nationally. To that end he refused a fourth nomination to his state legislature in order to accept one for Congress at Washington. And he met defeat in the first national election just as he had met it at the close of his first state campaign. But he was no more daunted by the second defeat than he had been by the first. That is why he walked out again in the campaign four years later—to win by a big majority.

<4>

AND so we find Abraham Lincoln in Washington ready to take his seat in Congress as a Whig representative in 1846. Those were the days of turmoil following the annexation of Texas; the days of President Polk's declaration of war with Mexico; and the days of hot discussions over what was to be done with slavery in the newly acquired Southwest. Lincoln, of course, with his sense of fair play, was against the Mexican war. Equally, or more so, he was against slavery in the new territory. But even though he must have resented the whole situation, he did not succeed in making much of an impression on those about him. At the end of his one term he was not even a candidate for reelection. Perhaps that was because he really hoped for an appointment as commissioner of the General Land Office. Instead, however, of being given that, he was offered the governorship of the far-off Oregon territory, which he refused.

After a swing through New England to make a series of campaign speeches, Abraham Lincoln went back to Springfield to settle down to his law practice as if nothing could ever move him out of it again. Never taking a case which he felt he could not honestly defend, never overcharging, always sharply keen, he built up a substantial state-wide reputation as a lawyer who was equally fair to all clients—rich or poor.

Even while busily defending a long list of clients, Lincoln, however, could not close his eyes or his ears to the tumult going on over slavery. There was his own vow—never forgotten—taken long ago to "hit that thing hard." There was the present question sweeping the whole land into fury. Should new states be admitted as slave or free? Of

course, Abraham Lincoln was alive to all that, but even so he managed to attend to his own private business fairly well until Stephen A. Douglas, senator from Illinois, struck out with his full political power in support of the Kansas-Nebraska bill.

That was too much for Lincoln to stand quietly. And so out he strode with all his great awkward strength of mind, with all of his great heart hot with anger, to meet Stephen A. Douglas. At first that meeting may have seemed to be more state than national in its importance. But two years later, in 1856, Lincoln had nevertheless become well enough known to receive 110 votes for vice-president at the Philadelphia convention of the new Republican party. That same year, as presidential elector, he spoke throughout Illinois.

But even though leaders had long before begun to reckon with Illinois it was not until 1858, when Stephen A. Douglas came up for reelection as United States senator, that the full white light of national interest first flooded that state. It was then that Abraham Lincoln, stepping forth as Republican candidate for the same Senate seat, startled the country by his famous warning that "A house divided against itself shall fall." That warning was the opening cry of the famous Lincoln-Douglas debate which, under the two leaders, swept up and down the whole state while the nation looked on in a white heat of excitement either for or against the extension of slavery.

In the end Lincoln lost the seat in the Senate—Stephen A. Douglas won the election. In winning that election, however, Douglas lost his chance to be president. And Lincoln won his. The fire and logic of Lincoln's speeches had echoed out over the land with such force that other states now wanted to hear him. For a year he traveled

through the Middle West and the East, hurling his challenge of "free or slave" far and wide. Illinois grew steadily more proud of him. The new Republican party saw him standing head and shoulders above every other leader. In the spring of 1860 that party nominated him for president. In the fall they elected him.

But between his election in November and his inauguration the following March, the Southerners had time to work great disaster. The South knew Abraham Lincoln's stand on slavery. It should have known also that if ever it had a chance to be heard and to be treated fairly, it would have that right under him. Instead of considering that, the leaders seemed to take his election as a threat against not only their right as individuals to own slaves, but the right of southern states to determine their own policies with regard to slavery. As a result, with Buchanan sitting helplessly in the president's chair, with Abraham Lincoln fretting his heart out in helpless anxiety, seven Southern states seceded to organize a new government called the Confederate States of America with Jefferson Davis president, and to seize military posts and public buildings within their border.

5

By the time, therefore, that Abraham Lincoln took his oath of office March 4, 1861, the "house divided" certainly seemed toppling to its fall. But not to Abraham Lincoln, for he immediately declared that no state having once been a part of the Union could ever be separated from it. At the same time he warned the seceding states that while he had no intention of interfering with them so long as they respected government authority, he did intend to see that they recognized that authority.

The first exercise of that Federal power began early in the next month when Lincoln ordered a fleet to carry supplies to the starving troops shut up by Confederate forces at Fort Sumter in the Charleston harbor. The President announced clearly that he did not mean to reinforce the fort. At the same time he announced that he would in no way tolerate any interference with the work of unloading the supplies at Charleston. The Confederates defiantly answered by opening fire on Fort Sumter and by keeping up that fire until the Federal troops, thirty-four hours later, were forced to march out.

And that news came to Lincoln, as the president who had just sworn "to preserve, protect, and defend" the government of the United States. What did he do? Fort Sumter surrendered on April 14. On April 15th, the following proclamation went forth from Washington:

> "Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, in virtue of the power in me vested by the Constitution and the laws, have thought fit to call forth, and hereby do call forth, the militia of the several states of the Union to the aggregate number of seventy-five thousand, in order to suppress said combination, and to cause the laws to be duly executed."

Civil War was begun. Everybody, at first, believed it would soon be over. But within three weeks, another call went out for over 64,000 soldiers and 18,000 sailors. And where the first enlistment had been set for a three months' term, the second was made for three years. Even although he had to give up the hope of ending the trouble swiftly, President Lincoln kept right on trying to steady the toppling Union. He always wanted to save that Union even more

than he wanted to free the slaves. He hoped to do both. To that end he urged the slave owners to free their slaves in return for money paid by the United States government. But the Southern states by that time were not only fighting to keep their slaves, but even more bitterly to defend their state rights to do as they pleased in the matter.

So the war, instead of ending quickly, increased in terrible bitterness. The early Southern Virginia victories were balanced later by Northern ones down along the lower Mississippi and thus the Union forces managed to cut off the Western Confederate states from those to the East. Over in Virginia, General Lee's army, at first successful in a march toward Washington, was swept back in defeat. After that Abraham Lincoln looked out over his countrymen and seeing them more steadily grim through long days of marching, long nights of watching, through hours and days of relentless fighting, decided it was now as good a time as any to strike and strike hard. On January first, 1863, he, therefore, sent his Emancipation Proclamation ringing out over the whole land—North and South—ordering and declaring:

> "that all persons held as slaves within said designated states and parts of states are, and henceforth shall be, free."

But to order was one thing; to get Congress to frame that order into a constitutional amendment was another; and, then, after that to wait and watch through long weary months while the different states accepted or refused that amendment was still a third.

That is why the nation had a chance to test fully Abraham Lincoln's never-ending patience, never-ending understanding; but also his never-ending will to finish

what he once had begun. He was sure he had set his feet in the right place. He meant to stand firm.

And he did. It took one whole year to bring Congress up to the point of proposing the Thirteenth Amendment to the states for ratification. It took another year for a sufficient number of those states to make that ratification sure. But once done, never again could any one of the United States hold slaves. The long, long struggle over that was now ended for ever and a day. Abraham Lincoln had certainly "hit hard."

In the meantime, the war dragged on. Day after day Lincoln listened to the messages coming up from the South. Loss of life, destruction of property, ruthless victories, lay on his heart like lead. As if all of that were not enough for one man and one nation to face, England took sides with the South, fitted out Confederate privateers, and generally disregarded America's policy of neutrality. To add to that foreign complication, France, seeing the United States absorbed in her own troubles, seized her chance to establish her protection of Maximilian of Austria as emperor of Mexico; which meant that the Monroe Doctrine was in danger.

And along with the Southern war campaigns, along with his struggles with Congress, along with the bickerings within his own cabinet, along with all these disturbing foreign interferences, President Lincoln's first term drew near a close. There was no question about his being nominated. His party stood back of him in that to a man. But the campaign that followed was one to try the soul of any man. The people of the country were sick to death of war. The North bitterly resented the draft which Lincoln now had to order to reinforce the troops fighting to hold the Union together. Army officers, jealous of the President's

promotions, fought his reelection. And worse than all there were those close to Lincoln at Washington who never ceased scheming against him and his plans.

In the face of all that Abraham Lincoln was elected two to one over General McClellan, his opponent. Then as the winter passed news of victory succeeding victory came North. Sherman began his victorious march to the sea. Grant closed in on Lee near Richmond. And with hope stirring his tired heart, Lincoln, in his second inaugural address, appealed to the nation:

> "with malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in."

That was in March. In April he was down in Richmond to see the defeated Southern army march out of that city. The slaves were freed. The war was won. Now there lay ahead the stupendous task of healing the breach between the North and the South—the task of bringing the bitterly rebellious states back again to loyal support of the Union. But, after all, that was a work of patient, never-ending sympathy and understanding. Lincoln had never once lost that in the whole long weary struggle.

So he went back to Washington deeply glad and not at all daunted by the days to come. He had come thus far and the great mercy of the man made him eager to go on. Three days after his return from Richmond, he and his wife, together with some friends, went to see a play at the Ford Theatre. There, while he was resting, at peace, and happy, John Wilkes Booth came into his box and fired on him from the rear. Without a cry, without a start, the President fell forward just as he sat there quietly relaxed

and smiling. Without regaining consciousness, without speaking, he died a few hours later.

He rests today where he longed to rest—back among his own townspeople in Springfield under the wide skies of Illinois. His own state remembers him in the St. Gauden's statue at Chicago, where he stands as if sweeping with his eyes his whole loved land of broad plains and magnificent streams. His government remembers him as a figure of tremendous power, gazing out between the temple-like pillars of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington—out towards the Washington Monument, out over the dome of the Capitol and beyond over a country beginning to forget the old savage hurt of civil war under the flag of the Union.

Chapter VIII

STARTING ALL OVER

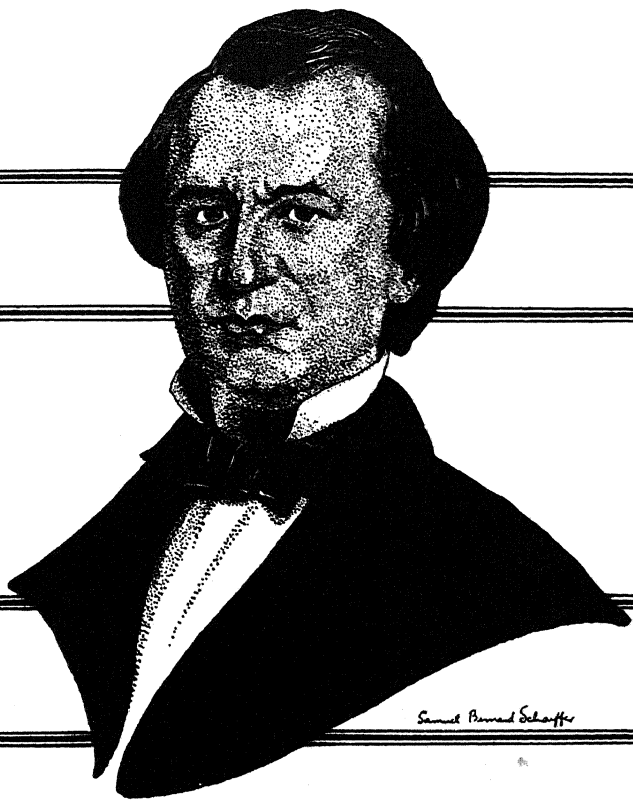
I. ANDREW JOHNSON

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THE whole land lay desolate under the soft spring skies of that April of 1865. To be sure the war was over—but what of it? In the North there was scarcely a house where death had not entered. In the South, not only death had bowed the people low, but in all that broad, sunny country there was barely an acre left which had not been trampled over, fought over, laid bare by the destruction of war. In between the two sections bitter hatred rose like a wall—black and pitiless. Abraham Lincoln—with his great understanding heart—was dead.

And Andrew Johnson was taking Abraham Lincoln's place in the president's chair—Andrew Johnson, a man from the "poor South" whom the Southern aristocrats despised and ridiculed; Andrew Johnson whom the Northern political leaders already distrusted and feared; also, let it be remembered the same Andrew Johnson whom Abraham Lincoln, himself, had chosen to be his vice-president. For the new president, no matter what mistakes he had made in the past, no matter how many he still was bound to make in the future, stood yesterday, today, and tomorrow, fearlessly, powerfully, to preserve and protect the Union.

Since his purpose was certainly the purpose of the North, and since even the South had now to accept that purpose as part of the price of defeat, why didn't—why couldn't—



Andrew Johnson

the new president and those about him at the Capitol have come together in that April of 1865, to let bygones be bygones and to work out that purpose for the good of the whole nation? Of course, one of the reasons they could not was because the war was still too close; the land still too drenched with hatred and dark suspicion, for any one group to trust, unquestioningly, any other group. Even Abraham Lincoln, if he had lived, would have met mistrust and doubt in his efforts to bring the people together.

And Andrew Johnson was not an Abraham Lincoln, even though the two had alike fought their way against great odds to the high place both held. Perhaps the one greatest difference between the two lay in their own attitude toward the world. Lincoln had a nice sense of his own place among people; he never, apparently, felt beneath any man; he never, apparently, felt above any. On the other hand, Andrew Johnson, shy and great-hearted—because of his very shyness—was always on the defensive, always on the lookout for opposition—and, so, always found it. Then when that opposition came he struck—struck often in a hard-headed, raw, uncontrolled manner that caused people to misjudge, not only the man, but all that the man was trying to do.

In looking back, one wonders what might have happened if Andrew Johnson had been a native of the free and equal, man-to-man, western frontier as Lincoln was. Instead, Andrew was born in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1808—just a year before Lincoln began life out in the pioneer cabin of Kentucky. North Carolina was anything but a pioneer country—anything but a land where men were born free and equal, for there was a well-established class of aristocratic slave owners who naturally governed all social and political life; and there was, also, a poor class, who as a

rule, expected the aristocrats to have most of the world's good fortune and so made no effort to gain either position or money for themselves. Jacob and Polly Johnson, Andrew's father and mother, belonged to that poor class.

What is more, they were quite contented and comfortable in it, for Jacob was the very popular porter of Raleigh's once famous Casso's Inn, and loved by the whole town as an honest, jolly man who apparently had no ambition except to be liked, to guide hunting and fishing parties, and to see that hungry guests were fed bountifully at the inn. Polly, his wife, was equally respected and liked. They lived—when not in the inn itself in a rough little cottage inside the inn yard. And it was there, in that cottage, that Andrew Johnson came into the world during the week of Christmas festivities for which Casso's Inn was famous.

Three years later Jacob Johnson leaped into a stream to save two of his friends, guests of the inn, from drowning. He succeeded in saving both of the men, but he himself died from the exposure and exhaustion the effort cost. He was so well remembered that fifty years later his townspeople erected a monument to him, inscribed:

> "In memory of Jacob Johnson. An honest man, loved and respected by all who knew him."

Which was all very well but which didn't help Polly, his wife, to find clothes and shelter for herself, small three-year old Andrew, and William, then eight. For while Jacob Johnson had many friends, he never had had any money. His wife, therefore—unable to read or write but honest and hard working—now set up a hand loom and became known as Polly the Weaver. But work as hard as she could, the struggle proved too great. So she married

again three years later—married Turner Dougherty who had no more money than Jacob Johnson had had.

It was necessary, therefore, for the boys of the family to begin early to earn their own living; so William was apprenticed to the town tailor, and, later, when he was fourteen, Andrew was bound to the same man. In turn for whatever work they could do, the master agreed to feed, clothe, and teach his trade to the two boys. Since neither boy could probably do very much or very good work, they had to make up for their lack of skill by sewing early and late. It wasn't an easy job—bending over, sewing all day long—but it is not on record that Andrew Johnson ever once whined. When once through for the day, however, how he raced, how he tore the very clothes off of his back until the tailor's wife, in despair, sewed him up in a coarse, heavy, homespun shirt, proof against even his swelling muscles. Even in those early years, Andrew was always out in front—leading, shouting commands to all the town boys, shouting them so that wherever he went, whatever he did, the other boys followed.

In the meantime, he had begun to listen eagerly to men who came into the shop talking of public affairs. Two of those men, Mr. Litchford, foreman of the shop, and Dr. Hill, saw the boy's interest and stopped to read to him from their papers, to talk over what they read, and then to give him speeches and essays which he laboriously spelled out for himself. That was all he could do to educate himself even if his work had given him more time; for there wasn't so much as one small schoolhouse in the whole town of Raleigh.

But by the time he was sixteen and standing five feet, five inches tall, the very live, dark-eyed boy could stand the dull days of stitching no longer. So he ran away. And

William ran with him. Of course, the tailor was outraged and did everything he could to trace the two boys, but they managed to get clear away and to be free at last. When they reached Carthage, seventy miles distant, Andrew set up his own tailor shop in a shack there and almost at once had all the work he could do. But his very success threatened him with discovery by his old master, so he and William moved on to Laurens. Evidently Andrew had by that time begun to be very uncomfortable over his broken bond. Besides, it was winter and probably home seemed more attractive to him. At any rate he and his brother worked their way back to Raleigh and Andrew hunted up his old master and asked to be taken back. The tailor, in his turn, asked Andrew to furnish security. That was impossible for Andrew to do so that effort ended.

Andrew was now not only penniless and without work, but, because of having broken his apprenticeship once before, was unable to get work. His stepfather, mother, and brother were about as bad off as he was. At last they all decided to leave Raleigh, and to cross over the mountains into the new land beyond. Piling their shabby belongings high in a small, two-wheeled cart, they were off to climb low hills, ford broad streams, then to follow the Daniel Boone trail over the mountains. Taking turns riding and walking, sleeping out under the open sky, shone on by the sun, beaten by storms—the way seemed never-ending. At last, however, the day did come when they stood, fairly breathless, gazing down on the promised land below.

2

THAT land was to become the most beloved spot in all America to Andrew Johnson. The town of Greeneville set down in its midst was to be his own town for the

rest of his life. From there he was to go forth many times; but he was always to come back as one does to the one place in the world which means home. It was September, 1826, when the Johnson family arrived in Greeneville. For a time Andrew worked hither and yon until the Greeneville tailor gave up his work. Then, he, at once, rented a shop of his own and hung up his famous sign—"A. Johnson Tailor Shop."

There Andrew Johnson began stitching again, began pushing his hot goose over steaming cloth, began to turn out the best clothes in all that countryside. And continued to do so while young men and old men gathered in that shop to talk as he sewed as well as through long hours after that sewing was done for the day. Among those who came was Blackstone Daniel, the village plasterer, who soon became Andrew's closest friend, to remain so all of his life. Then, there was Sam Milligan, a graduate of William and Mary College, a teacher at Greeneville College.

And there was Elsie McCardle, Scotch, brown-haired, hazel-eyed, wholesome, loyal, and very good to look at. Andrew met her shortly after he reached Greeneville. They were married the next year. Now, even with all of his own efforts, Andrew could then barely read, could spell only the simplest words, and could write even less well than he could read and spell. But Elsie McCardle could do all of those things quite well. So she began to teach Andrew. She kept right on teaching him until he could write a readable page, spell as well as most men of his time, and read everything far and wide. Even more than all that, Elsie McCardle was always there in Andrew Johnson's life—steady and sure.

In the meantime, Sam Milligan was lending Andrew books, while Andrew, himself, was walking the four miles

out to the college—the four miles back as well—every Friday night to the meeting of a debating club which he had joined. And the college boys formed the habit of gathering in Andrew's tailor shop to thresh out every problem of human life. To keep up with all this Andrew had to keep well informed on all news of the day, and, as well as he could, on all matters of philosophy, religion, and government. To that end, he hired a reader at fifty cents a day to fill him full of thoughts and facts, while he, himself, continued to stitch.

And to stitch so well that the tailor shop prospered financially. In truth, that shop did so well that by the end of four years, Andrew and Elsie moved—from the one room where they had lived ever since they were married—to a home of their own for which they paid a thousand dollars. Shortly after that, they bought a building, moved it down the street into the corner of the yard, and Andrew again nailed up his sign of "A. Johnson Tailor."

Even before he moved into this new home, however, Andrew had begun to lead in Greeneville's political game. Up to then that game had been played almost entirely by the dominating aristocrats of Greeneville. But now affairs changed, for Andrew Johnson became alderman before he was twenty-one, was reelected twice, and then became mayor at twenty-two to keep that office for three years.

By that time not only the town of Greeneville knew Andrew Johnson as a prosperous young man who had a keen eye in political leadership, but the whole countryside of east Tennessee also knew him. That countryside was made up of small farms of less than a hundred acres, where the people raised enough for a living, where there was rarely more than two hundred dollars in cash coming into any one home in a year, where women wove, men hunted,

trapped, and fished to supplement what their fields yielded. It was there, also, that Andrew Johnson found the sort of a man of whom he said:

> "When his country calls him, he will unhitch his horse, leave the plough standing idle in the furrow, shoulder his musket, and march to the front."

3

And east Tennessee was also the land of Andrew Jackson. It was but natural, therefore, that Andrew Johnson should begin by being a Jacksonian Democrat and continue to be one to the last day of his life. It was also natural that his town and country neighbors should see much of the same political wisdom in young Johnson that had led them to send Jackson to their state legislature and then to Washington.

Whereupon, recognizing that wisdom, they saw to it that Johnson served as delegate to the State Constitutional Convention. He made good there. They sent him to represent them in the House of Legislature. He proved good there also and they continued to send him for ten straight years before they decided that they needed him more at home than in Washington and so brought him back to be governor of Tennessee from 1853 to 1857. Immediately after that he went back to Washington; this time to the Senate where he was to stay until 1862.

Which meant, that, by the end of that time, Andrew Johnson had been continuously in public service for thirty-four years. What had he done in those years? How had he kept faith with his friends back in east Tennessee? As a Democrat after their own heart, he had stood for low

tariff, for acquiring new territory, for the opening of free western lands, and always—never forgetting his own struggle for an education—for free schools. Also, as a member of Southern democracy he worked and voted to extend slavery into new territory and to quiet all opposition to it.

He also worked and voted to defeat Abraham Lincoln for president. But, although he was in sympathy with his own South on the slavery question, he certainly was not in sympathy with them if slavery meant a break with the Union. Once having agreed to the Constitution of the United States, he argued, no state *could* withdraw. That being the way he felt, he sat firm as a rock, immovable in his seat in the Senate when the Southern senators withdrew as their states seceded. Of course, there was tremendous excitement. Could it be possible that one of the South's own most powerful politicians was deserting that South? In the midst of the wild clamor, Andrew Johnson stood up to hurl forth:

> "Though I fought against Lincoln, I love my country. I love the Constitution. Senators—my blood, my existence I would give to save the Union."

Was that when Lincoln first really saw Andrew Johnson —saw him and knew him as a man whom he could trust when he needed him most? Perhaps so. For certainly the man from Tennessee stood tall and stood firm through all of those miserably anxious months while Lincoln, himself, sat out in Springfield helplessly waiting for James Buchanan's term of office to end and his own to begin.

He stood even more tall and more firm when his own beloved Tennessee withdrew from the Union as it did

just after Lincoln took his oath of office. He knew and he liked those men down in his state; but something was dead wrong with them now. The Union army by its western victories in the spring of 1862 opened the way for Johnson to go back and set that wrong right. Lincoln helped by appointing him military governor of his conquered state. With that power and his own knowledge of his people, he managed to restore and start running a loyal state government in Tennessee.

Abraham Lincoln, by now, not only saw in Johnson a man whom he could trust for his loyalty to the Union, but a man whose political ability made him a vital power in defending that Union. And a man about whom he himself said:

> "No man has a right to judge Andrew Johnson in any respect, who has not suffered as much and done as much as he for the nation's sake."

Therefore, when the time came to set up the national Republican ticket for 1864, President Lincoln chose Andrew Johnson to run with him as vice-president. But, Johnson was a Democrat; Lincoln a Republican. What is more Johnson absolutely refused to be nominated as a Republican. Finally, to give Lincoln the man he demanded, the name of the nominating convention was made Union in place of Republican.

4

If Andrew Johnson had remained vice-president probably that party difference would not have seriously interfered with the work both he and Lincoln wanted most to do. But when Lincoln was shot that night of April 14, to die the next morning, and Johnson found himself, suddenly,

facing the land as president, he also found himself facing a group of Republican leaders who seemed to forget that Johnson was a Democrat, had always been one, and would remain one in the face of their claim of having elected him.

In addition to those party leaders—many of whom wanted the South punished and punished severely—there were the people of the North expecting the new president—from the poor South—to be unmerciful to the rich Southern plantation owners. But Andrew Johnson had no such intention, then or ever. Instead, he, like Lincoln, wanted above everything else to restore the Union to peace and prosperity. To do that, the terrible hurt to the pride of the South must be handled with wise understanding. Victory and defeat alike must be forgotten if the country was to recognize equally the rights of its people.

President Johnson, therefore, began at once to try to heal the breach between North and South. He became president in April. In May he issued a general pardon to all members of the Confederacy—except the most radical leaders—provided those members would take an oath of allegiance to the United States. Over the states already working to restore themselves to the Union, he appointed provisional governors and instructed them to arrange for state conventions elected from such people as had sworn to be loyal citizens and were otherwise entitled to vote.

All of this was according to Lincoln's Southern policy. All of this was done by Johnson before Congress assembled the following December. Immediately upon that assembling, trouble began. Congress refused to admit senators and congressmen from the Southern states even though those states wanted and were struggling to regain their place with the government. Certain radical Republican leaders demanded that the freed slaves be given the right to vote;

and at the same time demanded that enough white leaders in the South be disfranchised and thus give the Republicans the lead over the Democrats in that section.

In all of those movements, Johnson saw damage to the Federal government. So the split between Congress and President widened. To gain further support, President Johnson, himself, took an active part in the summer and fall campaign of 1866. And right there was where Andrew Johnson's power began seriously to crumble. For it was then that, for some reason, his old bitter defensive attitude toward all opposition came to the surface. To hide his unexplainable feeling of inferiority, he struck blindly out and often in an ineffective, undignified manner. Of course, he did more harm than good. How much harm nobody can be sure, but, at any rate, when the new Congress assembled it had even a larger Republican majority than the year before.

With that control established, Congress now proceeded to push aside, to disregard entirely all of President Johnson's plans and policies. In the face of his bitter opposition, the members continued their plans of restoring military control in the South, enfranchisement of the negroes, and disfranchisement of southern whites. Desperate in his desire to keep his inaugural oath, President Johnson determined to bring matters to some sort of an issue that would bring him justification and, so, renewed power.

To do this, he deliberately dismissed Edwin M. Stanton, his troublesome secretary of war, right in the face of the Tenure of Office Act which had just been passed by Congress and which had taken all power from the president to dismiss any man from office who had been placed in that office by the consent or approval of that body. Johnson hoped his act would go to the Supreme Court and there be

approved. Instead, he was impeached for "high crimes and misdemeanors," and subjected to a trial in Congress which lasted from March to May, 1868. Although the evidence was very meager against him, Congress was so politically opposed to him, that, in the end, Andrew Johnson escaped conviction by only one vote. Sixty years later, in October, 1926, the Supreme Court of the United States, justified him by declaring the Tenure of Office Act, invalid because it was "an attempt to interfere with the constitutional right of the President."

If he could but have known that even the distant future held that justification, perhaps Andrew Johnson might have gone home the next year less bitter in heart. But even though he was bitter he was not broken, for in 1875, he was reelected to the United States Senate by his old Tennessee friends. Just why he wanted to go back is hard to say, unless it was to make one speech, ringing with his old fire and brilliancy, which denounced his former opponents while at the same time it made apologies for his own mistakes.

After that he went home to Greeneville; only to die in July of the following summer. As the news of his death flashed over the country, telegrams came from all sorts of people everywhere. He would have liked that recognition. But what he would have loved above everything else was the never-ending stream of plain people coming from the hills and the valleys to say their good-by's to him as he lay asleep wrapped in his flag with the thirty-seven stars—not one gone—and his head resting on the Constitution of the United States.

Those old friends buried him high on a hill where he had so often delighted to stand looking out over the beauty of east Tennessee. To-day, the United States government owns that hill and has turned it into a national cemetery. Tennes-

see has built a wide, free road to swing off through Greeneville, past the old tailor shop, running wind-swept and sun-drenched for five hundred miles of smooth traveling for tired feet. That road, a road for the countryside people, is called the Andrew Johnson Highway. The Old Commoner would have liked nothing better than to walk that road.

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As if worn out with the never-ending quarrels of the political leaders at Washington, the people of the United States now turned their backs on all those trained and experienced in statecraft to elect Ulysses S. Grant president. Perhaps they argued that if he had military genius enough to defend the Union as valiantly as he had, he must also have sufficient wisdom to preside wisely over it. At least there was no doubt they meant to do him high honor, for they heaped their electoral votes high until he counted two hundred and fourteen out of two hundred and ninety-four. But General Grant was the victorious general of the North. How did the South feel to see him take the reins of national government? How did he, himself, feel towards the conquered South? Was he a man of a wise and understanding heart as well as one of high courage and ruthless military power? From what sort of people, from what part of the country, had he come?

To begin with he was an American for eight generations back—that Scottish kind of American whose people had landed up in Massachusetts in 1630 and then shoved gradually on through to the Middle West. Jesse Grant, the President's father, was a tanner—a good one—and a thrifty manager, but a somewhat vain, boasting, argumentative man, who took tremendous pride in Ulysses, the oldest of his six children. Hannah Simpson, Jesse Grant's wife and mother of those six, was a very strong woman who treated her children with a certain gracious courtesy combined with good common sense.

Those two began housekeeping in a small frame cottage at Point Pleasant, Ohio, where Ulysses was born April 27,



U. S. Grant

1822. Later, the family moved to Georgetown, also in Ohio. There Jesse Grant attracted considerable attention by building a two-story brick house, a most unusual display of magnificence in that western land in those days. But that magnificence doesn't seem to have made the life of the eldest son any different from that of the neighbor boys. He chopped and hauled wood. He worked hard at whatever there was to be done. He also played hard—swam, skated, raced—and rode a horse as if he were grown to its back.

This out-of-door pioneer life, no doubt, had much to do in building up the strength to endure the exposure and hardships he had to endure as a soldier later in life. It also helped to teach him part of that resourcefulness which made him so swift and daring in his military campaigns. In between this work and play, the boy went to the village school during the winter months. Then he had one winter at Maysville Academy and another at Ripley, where he took part in debates but where he absolutely refused to make any speeches alone.

Although these advantages were more than many pioneer boys could claim, they did not satisfy Jesse Grant's ambition for Ulysses. Therefore, he set about getting his son a cadetship at West Point; and succeeded, much to the excited surprise of the neighbors who couldn't understand why a tanner's son should be so honored; also, much to the amusement of that seventeen-year-old son's fellow cadets at the military academy. So far as his studies were concerned, it can't be said that Ulysses Grant did much to offset that surprise and ridicule; for he really just managed to stand twenty-first in a class of thirty nine.

But when it came to riding a horse—he far outrode every cadet of his time. At last to challenge his horsemanship, a young soldier held one end of a pole high over his head

while resting the other against a wall and Grant was asked to take it at a jump on horseback. Racing swiftly and easily down the stretch to the pole, horse and boy rose in the air, flew over the barrier, and were off on the other side without so much as a stumble or the loss of a second. For many a day that jump was one of the proudest on record at West Point.

2

GRADUATING from the United States Military Academy at twenty-one, Ulysses Grant was assigned to duty at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, with the commission of brevet-second lieutenant. The next year he was sent with his regiment—the fourth infantry—down to Louisiana. And the third year found him, at twenty-three, over in Mexico with Zachary Taylor moving towards the Rio Grande. That is where he saw his first real fighting, also where he had his first taste of victory when the Americans won the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma.

When General Taylor's force was divided, Grant was sent with the troops who served under General Winfield Scott. Under that command, he again swept along from one victorious battle to another, to be made a captain for gallantry and finally to see the flag of his country fly high over all that great southwestern land. How would he have felt over the triumphant close of that war if he could have looked on down through the next fifteen years to see trouble rising out of the question of slavery in the territory he had helped to win? How would he have felt if he could have seen the responsibility he, himself, would have twenty years hence? What difference might it have made in his own life could he have foreseen that responsibility?

But, of course, Ulysses Grant had no way to foresee all of that. So, when he returned to the United States, and to the rather dull routine of army post life, he began to drink and continued to do so until he finally resigned his commission in 1854. He was then thirty-two and in the very prime of his life. Back of him lay years of military training and brilliant service. But he left all that to begin farming and dealing in real estate near St. Louis, Missouri. Six years later he moved up to Galena, Illinois, where Jesse Grant had taken his family years before. There Ulysses Grant clerked in his father's store, earning only about eight hundred dollars a year—a discouraged and, apparently, broken man.

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THEN came that April of 1861 with Abraham Lincoln's call for troops. Civil war was on. Immediately Ulysses Grant offered his services to help defend the government of the United States. And was accepted. In June he was appointed colonel of the twenty-first regiment of Illinois infantry and was sent into Missouri. By August he had been promoted to the rank of brigadier general of volunteers and assigned to command a territory on the Mississippi. There he showed such ability that General Halleck gave him the task of clearing the lower Cumberland and Tennessee rivers.

After that came a year and a half of victories, defeats, of disagreement with General Halleck, of days at Vicksburg when Grant was relieved of all important service, and was thought by everybody to be in disgrace. He might—if he had done as others did—have retired. Instead, he went right on in his own rather glum fashion, never flinching in his determi-

nation to win, never reducing for one second his astounding energy.

And Abraham Lincoln, looking out from far-off Washington, worn by the burden of his responsibility and distracted by petty jealous bickerings among army officers—pinned his faith to Ulysses Grant. Then Halleck was called to Washington as general-in-chief, other officers were sent to other commands, and Grant found himself left to take Vicksburg alone. He took it—took it after all sorts of interference from others; took it with his old-time vigor and daring; and in the taking swept up, on July 4, 1863, prisoners numbering 29,491 in one of the most important victories of the whole war. For that he was made major general of the regular army with four armies under his command. With three of those armies he began the battle of Chattanooga, to win it three days later, and thus to destroy the last Confederate hold in the center and west. At the same time he won for himself supreme command of the entire Union army of over one million men.

That is when he marched on over to Virginia to take direct command himself of the eastern army of the North against General Lee. At the same time he kept close supervision of the campaigns going on to the south and center. For months, both the North and the South looked on while battle after battle was fought with a terrible loss of life in Virginia. As if he were made of iron—body, mind, and soul—General Grant pressed General Lee steadily south until the few gallant Confederate troops, ragged, starved, dead with fatigue, were driven back to Richmond in hopeless surrender.

And the man who had had the relentless will, the strength of purpose, the unflinching courage to bring this defeat to the enemy, was so sensitive to human suffering

that, at Shiloh, he lay outdoors in an icy rain because he could not bear to see the surgeons working inside, under shelter, on his wounded men. He was also the same man who, having once given his word to General Lee concerning the terms of surrender, threatened to resign if those terms were not kept by the President of the United States.

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After the close of the war General Grant went to Washington. There he became involved in the quarrel between Congress and Andrew Johnson over the Tenure of Office Act. In fact, he was the man whom President Johnson asked to take Edwin Stanton's place as secretary of war, when he—Johnson—threw down the challenge to Congress by removing Stanton from that position. Still later, when Congress refused—in answer to Johnson's defiance—to confirm Grant's appointment, Grant retired from the struggle. Johnson had not counted on his new secretary's doing that and a bitter quarrel resulted between the two men.

Up until this time, Grant, like Zachary Taylor—always a soldier, never a politician—had cast just one vote in his whole life and that had been for President Buchanan. Now, however, the struggle between political leaders evidently appealed to him. His election to the presidency, therefore, must have brought him the gratification victory usually brings such a man; and doubly so, no doubt, when he found he was so universally the choice of his people.

What with the prostrate condition of the South immediately following the war and what with the general opposition of Congress to President Johnson's attempts to follow out Lincoln's generous policies toward the rebellious South, reconstruction had really not even got

under way before President Grant came into office. He therefore had a heavy burden to assume if he meant to continue his own understanding attitude toward the people he had so largely helped conquer.

But Ulysses Grant could be as gentle in handling such a people as he once had been ruthless, in battle, against them. In addition, he was thoroughly liked by his associates at Washington and so did not have Johnson's unpopularity to struggle against. So, gradually, in his administration, the breach between North and South began to grow a little less wide.

To be sure, when on March 30, 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment was passed, giving the right to vote to any citizen of the United States regardless "of race, color, or previous conditions of servitude," the South found itself under the domination of the lately freed slaves and the foreign whites—neither of whom had had sufficient experience to make that power safe in their hands. If ignorance in ruling had been all from which the helpless South had had to suffer, it would have been quite enough. But unprincipled men took advantage of the situation and the desperate people were subject to all sorts of graft. Naturally those conditions—plus the humiliation of the old slave owners over being ruled by those they considered their inferiors—did not help reconstruction to get far under way. Two years later, therefore, urged by the President, Congress repealed some of the severe penalties placed on former slave owners, and modified others.

The most important foreign affair of Grant's first four years was the negotiation of the Treaty of Washington. Several controversies long hanging fire between Great Britain and America were settled by this. Among those was the agreement to arbitrate the question of damage in-

flicted on the United States by Confederate ships fitted out by England. The decision of the Court of Arbitration later gave the United States $15,500,000.

But while helping the South to relieve itself somewhat from swindling in high public office, and while seeing that the nation was repaid for the loss Great Britain had brought upon it from undue interference, President Grant was unable to handle the dishonest practices then growing up within his own circle at Washington. To be sure, an act was passed in 1871 providing for a Civil Service Commission together with funds to enforce it. But such a reform was by no means popular, so that when those funds were exhausted the work of that Commission grew less and less. And even at the best Civil Service could not have checked the sort of corruption existing then among public officials. But Grant seemed utterly unaware that such corruption existed. For, despite his marvelous power to conduct wide and complicated military campaigns with the most delicate strategy, he had never used strategy to gain his own political ends and had never seemed to consider that others might use it. How, then, could he be expected to recognize corrupt dealings in positions of trust? Honest, simple, and unable to think of his associates as unprincipled, he was unbelievably blind to corruption going on all about him.

It was difficult for the country to think he could be so blind. Opposition, therefore, grew up to his reelection. However, he won that reelection even if his majority was not so high as four years before. But the political dishonesty smirching his first administration grew even worse in his second. The building of the transcontinental railways and development of many branches of industry led to great speculation in money circles; failures began in 1873;

a panic followed; and business depression began which was to last for several years. A bill providing for the resumption of specie payments which might have done much to steady the money affairs of the nation, was passed through the President's earnest recommendation, but was not enforced until years later. Altogether, President Grant's second administration was not a happy experience.

At the close of it, he and his wife and son took a journey around the world and were received with high honors everywhere. On his return he went back to Galena, Illinois, to live and to be persuaded to run a third time for the presidency. But he was defeated for nomination by the public prejudice against a third term.

After that, he gave up politics and moved to New York where he bought a home and invested all of his money in a banking firm. With his usual faith in the honesty of his associates, he paid no attention to the way the firm handled its business. Unfortunately, it evidently did not handle it well, for it failed in 1884.

And Ulysses Grant, then sixty-two, found himself not only penniless, but beginning, at the same time, to suffer intensely from the cancer which afterwards caused his death. Fortunately, about that time, the *Century Magazine* asked him to write an article. The public liked so well what he wrote, that he was encouraged to try writing his memoirs. Although he needed to do this to earn enough money to live, he wrote it so simply, so modestly, as well as with so much real charm, that he gave the world one of the best soldier's biographies now in existence. What is more, to the great joy of his friends, everywhere, the book had a record sale of about a million dollars.

The splendid fight that he made straight through those last months of terrible suffering only added to his fame

as one of the world's bravest men. In the spring of 1885, Congress made him happy by passing a bill creating him general on the retired list. That summer he moved to a cottage at McGregor, New York. There he lived the last five weeks of his life. Those weeks were a race with death to finish his memoirs. Grant won; for he wrote the last word four days before the end came.

No world citizen ever had greater honor given him at his death than he. No American citizen ever had more real grief expressed over his going. No great general ever had greater trappings of glory than he in his last procession through the streets of New York. But above all of those, the kindly simple man, Ulysses S. Grant, would have prized the legend—

Let Us Have Peace

inscribed over the entrance to his great tomb on Riverside Drive, New York City.

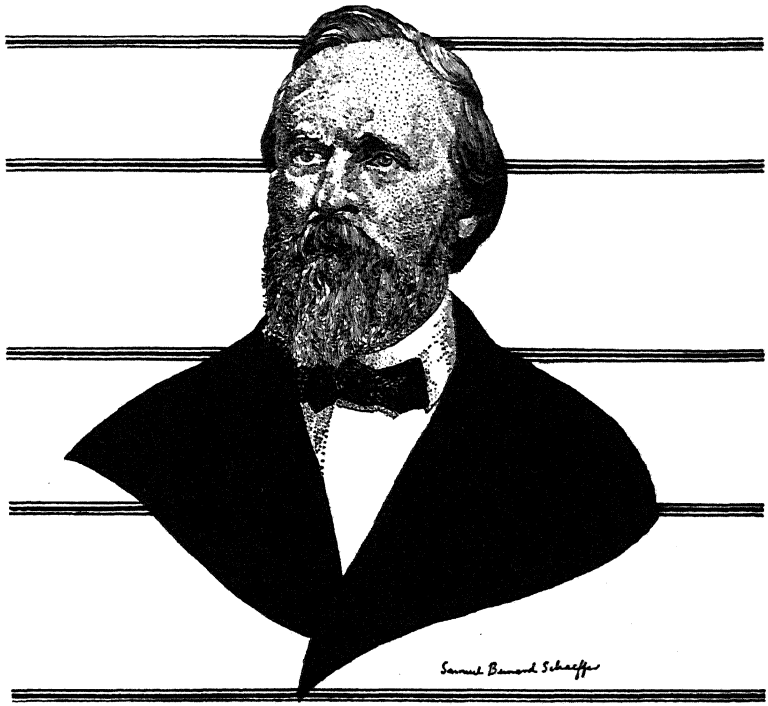
III. RUTHERFORD B. HAYES

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WHO and what next? After Andrew Johnson, the politician of great power and broad experience; after Ulysses S. Grant, the soldier of magnificent leadership; after both of those struggling to right the Ship of State from the storm of Civil War and neither one getting so very far—where should the people of the United States look for a president who might be trusted to do even as much for reconstruction as either Grant or Johnson?

Well—there was Rutherford Birchard Hayes serving his third term as governor out in Ohio. That fact in itself spoke well for his executive ability. In addition he had a record for war service that was as remarkable for modesty as it was for fearlessness and never-failing surety in command. On top of all that he was a man of dignified courtesy and, so far as anyone could measure, a man of safe judgment. Evidently the Republican party considered him not only a good executive, a good soldier, and a man to command respect—but also a keen enough politician to win them a victory. So they chose him to lead their campaign in 1876.

To be sure Rutherford Birchard Hayes had much on his side to make him able to lead and to win when he led. In his veins ran just the sort of blood to give him that power. In fact, the Hayes branch of his family had not only been leaders, but fighters as far back as the tenth century when the Hayes men are first heard of as valiant defenders of the Scotch crown. The Birchard branch—his mother's people—were of equally staunch English blood. Both families were among those good, stout patriots who landed in Massachusetts back in the sixteen hundreds.



R. B. Hayes

Out of those two families, the man who was made the seventeenth president of the United States, could claim that both of his grandfathers, and three out of four of his great grandfathers, had fought in the Revolution. The fourth great grandfather was kept busy by Connecticut collecting funds to pay for the upkeep of the fighters.

When anyone, in 1876, added to that inheritance of courageous loyalty the inheritance which belongs to a family who for generation after generation kept the motto *Recte* on their old Scotch coat of arms, that one had every right to expect that such a man elected president, even in the unsettled years of the late 1870's, was quite likely to prove strong and faithful.

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Some years before Rutherford Hayes was born, his own father—also called Rutherford—had moved from Vermont out to Delaware, Ohio, and there married Sophia Birchard. The two bought land and prospered, so that when the father died, three months before the son Rutherford was born in October, 1822, he left his family free from pressing money troubles. To add to their freedom from worry, Sardis Birchard, Rutherford's uncle, took charge of them all and became like a father to the two Hayes children, Fanny and Rutherford.

Those children were inseparable all through their early years. And the years were very happy ones. The two-story brick house, which they called home, was very comfortable. The garden and lawn about it were quite spacious enough for any sort of game. Besides—there was the farm lying along the winding stream which long years before had been named the Olentangy by Indians who loved it. The Hayes children made long visits out

there when sugar-making was on in the maple grove, when cherries were ripe, when the apples were ready for grinding to cider, and the nuts for gathering in the thick woods.

Then there was the village school where they went, for a short time, to be frightened out of their wits by the master, a small man, a thin, wiry Yankee, who took great pride in threshing the big boys into obedience, and in scaring others into studying by throwing an open jack-knife—so that it barely missed the head of the lazy one—to land quivering in the wall just beyond. Fortunately for their nerves, Fanny and Rutherford Hayes were taken from that school to be sent to private ones. Rutherford went to an academy at Norwalk, then to a boarding school at Middletown, Connecticut, and finally entered Kenyon College, at Gambier, Ohio, when he was sixteen.

At college the boy continued the same normal, happy life he had always led. He worked hard and stood well in his classes; but he was never prosy, never dull. On the other hand, he was one to whom life was joyous—especially out-of-doors—and, therefore, he was popular. He chose his friends carefully—then kept them always. And even at nineteen he had his own ideals of good sportsmanship; for he wrote in his diary:

"Let me triumph as a man or not at all."*

After graduating from Kenyon, he studied for ten months in a law firm in Columbus, Ohio, before going to Harvard to complete his professional training. It was at Harvard, in 1843, that he heard John Quincy Adams,

* All quotations taken from the writings of President Hayes are used by permission of the Hayes Memorial, Fremont, Ohio.

then far along in his seventies, speak, and gave his impression of the white-haired statesman as follows:

> "I heard J. Q. Adams address the Whigs of Norfolk County, yesterday. His speech contained little politics but much abolitionism."

Later in his life, Rutherford Hayes was going to conclude that to be a successful abolitionist one would have to be a hard-headed politician also. Even in the venerable Adams, he recognized something of this power for he went on to write:

> "He is quick, fearless, and full of the wit and learning of all ages."

Adams was not the only great man of his time whom the Ohio law student heard at Cambridge. In fact, for a young, vitally live, quick-witted Westerner the life of this Eastern college was crowded full of fascinating people and unusual happenings. There were Longfellow and Sparks lecturing at Harvard. There were the political meetings with Webster thundering forth his wonderful speeches in support of Henry Clay. It was while hearing those speeches of Eastern leaders that Rutherford Hayes began, then and there, to take an absorbing interest in the political life of his country.

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EVEN with all of those distractions, the young man managed to complete his study of law satisfactorily. That done he returned home and set up his own practice in Fremont, Ohio. But there were to be interruptions in the growth of that practice. First, there was the war with Mexico which greatly upset him. He tried to enlist, but his health broke, and instead of going to Texas to fight, he went for his

health. And found it by living a delightfully free life, driving, dancing, and riding day after day through northern and western Texas.

Strong and vigorous once more, he returned North, moved to Cincinnati to begin his practice, and in 1858 was elected city solicitor. He remained in that position until he enlisted in the Civil War in 1861. That meant he was living near the border line between North and South during the tense days when that line was being drawn ready to snap. It meant he was there also when Lincoln traveled from Springfield, Illinois, to Washington to take his oath of office in the spring of 1861. That is why we have the following picture in Hayes' own writing:

> "He [[Lincoln]] rode in a open carriage, standing erect with head uncovered, and bowing his acknowledgments."

as well as this conclusion:

> "He [[Lincoln]] believes in a policy of kindness—of delay to give time for passions to cool, but not in a compromise to extend the power and deadly influence of the slave question. This gives me great satisfaction."

But, as we know now, there wasn't to be any "delay." Fort Sumter fell the next month. Lincoln sent forth his first call for troops and four days after that call Rutherford Hayes was out drilling with a company of volunteers. On May 15, he wrote in his diary:

> "I would prefer to go into it [[the war]] if I knew I was to die or be killed in the course of it, than to live through and after it without taking any part in it."

In July he was on his way to western Virginia, as major of the twenty-third regiment of Ohio volunteers. That began a service which never ceased in activity until the close of the war. Something of what he had to face in camp life is shown in a letter to his niece written in the December following his enlistment:

> "Since I came to Virginia in July, I have not shaved; for weeks at a time I have slept in all clothes except boots—occasionally in boots and sometimes in spurs; a half a dozen times on the ground without shelter; once on the snow."

But as if glorying in his own endurance he goes on to say that he had kept well until—

> "since I have taken winter quarters in a comfortable house. Now I have a slight cold."

And so he continued his service, enjoying even the hardships and taking keen delight in commanding where the danger was greatest. After one of his most serious battles he wrote home:

> "This is the most successful and by all odds the pleasantest campaign I have ever had. I hardly know what I would change in it, except to restore life and limb to the killed and wounded."

Even when a serious wound at Smith Mountain left him lying out on the battlefield at the mercy of open firing, he found some joy, for he said later:

> "While I was lying down, I had considerable talk with a wounded Confederate soldier lying near me. I gave him messages for my wife and

friend in case I should not get up. We were right jolly and friendly. It was by no means an unpleasant experience."

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It was while he was still at the front, while the fighting in Virginia was still hottest in 1864, that his Republican friends back in Cincinnati nominated him for Congress. When the news reached Hayes, he wrote back:

"An officer fit for duty, who at this crisis would abandon his post to electioneer for Congress, ought to be scalped. You may feel perfectly sure I shall do no such thing."

But he did not need any electioneering. His nomination came in August. He was elected by an overwhelming majority in October. But he did not take his seat until after the war had ended. In fact he was not free to return to Cincinnati until a year from that October. It was the following December that he went to Washington to assume his new duties in Congress. There, while generally supporting his party's reconstruction policy, he gave his particular attention to his work as chairman of the library committee and to the introduction and carrying of resolutions to provide pensions and bounties for soldiers.

Two years of this sort of quiet but efficiently faithful work brought him reelection in 1866 by a majority which loomed up surprisingly high on a ticket generally showing a loss. Returning to his old seat he kept right on interesting himself in behalf of his old soldier friends, and working early and late for the success of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth amendments. That work continued until he was called back to be governor of his own state. And to remain

governor until 1876, when he became the Republican nominee for president against Samuel J. Tilden, Democrat.

Now Tilden was very popular because of his warfare against all sorts of dishonest handling of public trusts. More than that, his reform policies were bringing glory to the Democratic party. On the other hand, the scandals arising in Grant's administration had tended to decrease the hold which the Republican party had on the nation. As a result, the election of 1876 was very close; so close in fact, that the decision had to be turned over to Congress. Congress, on its side, appointed a commission. Finally, the contest ended with eight votes for Hayes; seven for Tilden.

After all of his previous majorities this last election must have seemed anything but reassuring to Rutherford Hayes, especially when he needed the full confidence of his people to do the work just waiting to be done. First, there was the South still staggering under its defeat; second, there was the whole country struggling against financial depression begun by the panic in the Grant administration; third, there was universal graft in high places. President Hayes' administration went far in straightening out all three of these tangles. To begin with, in the face of strong opposition from his own Republican party, he succeeded in getting the federal troops withdrawn from the capitals of Southern states. This, alone, cleaned up much abuse of political power in the South and was generally helpful in the restoring of that section to its old-time belief in itself. Then, to bring back the country's confidence in financial matters, he provided that the money market be steadied by resuming specie payments. Finally, he tried, also against his party's wishes, to clean up graft by using his influence toward the establishment of a Civil Service Commission.

By the end of these four years, President Hayes had the satisfaction of knowing that he had gone far in the tasks he had set himself. Perhaps he could not then see how far, but his countrymen know now that his fearless, sound administration finally set the face of the nation toward a longed-for peace and prosperity. As for a second term, he himself had said in his first campaign that he would not run again. Whether he would have been renominated is a question since he had so offended his party leaders by his fearless policies.

For months before the end of his administration, he looked eagerly forward to returning "to the freedom, independence, and safety of our home in the pleasant grove at Fremont." He lived on for a round dozen years in that "pleasant grove," spending his days in actively working to help his soldier friends; in arousing his state to the necessity for better conditions in prisons; and in making free schools more available everywhere.

> "I thought [he once said in those years] that when I laid down my official cares, I should have a tolerably easy life, but I have been kept about as busy for the last ten years working for other people as I ever was in my life. And I don't deny that I enjoy it."

One is glad to know that he kept right on "enjoying it" until within just a few days before his death in January, 1893. And to know, also, that he was equally glad to go, just as he did, full of years, full of content, ready for rest.

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Chapter IX

GOING STEADILY

I. JAMES A. GARFIELD AND CHESTER A. ARTHUR

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Out through the thick branches, sixteen-year-old James Garfield could just catch a glimpse of Lake Erie glistening under the sun. Once in a great while a white sail skimmed close along the far rim of the sky. What lay beyond that blue water? What port was waiting that boat? The boy's eyes had snapped with excitement as the sail came in sight. They grew heavy as it slipped away in the haze. What was the use of thinking of all that? Instead of a sail's rope in his hands he had an ax. Instead of a distant port to reach he had to finish chopping one hundred cords of wood.

What if every bone in his body did ache? What had that to do with getting through with that wood, which he had declared he could chop? If he could—then he would. So, turning his back on the shining lake, he swung his ax high to bring it down with a right vigorous ring into the log at his feet. Over and over that ax swung and fell, day after day, until, at last, the hundred cords were piled high—all done. James Garfield, then, collected twenty-five dollars and took it home to his mother.

For that was the habit of the Garfield boys—both of James and his older brother Thomas; and had been ever since James could remember. For, when he was only two years old, a forest fire had broken out dangerously near the

clearing in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, where the Garfield cabin stood. Abram Garfield, the father of James, a frontiersman, born of staunch New England Puritan stock, knew the threat held in that choking smoke drifting in through the tangle of trees and brush. There was no time to lose. Striking off down the trail, he met neighbor men who fought with him, fought desperately hour after hour, until the fire was beaten. After that, the man had staggered back down the trail, exhausted, had dropped on a stool to rest right where a stiff wind blew across his warm body, had taken a severe cold, and had died a few days later.

That left Abram Garfield's wife, a small, rather frail woman, alone, with her children. The farm was loaded with debt. Neighbors were scattered and as poor as she. But she was a pioneer woman, descended from an iron-willed French Huguenot group of New Englanders. What Abram Garfield had started to do, she would, of course, continue. Season after season the fields that had been cleared were planted and harvested. Year after year the young orchards were coaxed along, until, by the time James was a small boy, cherries were ready for picking, apples were ripening for cider, and the farm was yielding enough to given Eliza Garfield a chance to take an easier breath.

But there was still far from plenty on the Garfield farm. James, at twelve, was hoeing hour on hour out in the fields, was tending fires in between planting corn and potatoes, and was beginning to wonder whether he was really meant to be a farmer. He finally decided that whether he was or not, he would rather be a carpenter. About that time the family concluded that they could afford a new house—a new house with all of four rooms. That gave James his chance to learn carpentry with the men doing the building.



J. A. Garfield

By the time the new home was completed he had not only become a fair carpenter, but had gathered together some tools and was the proud owner of a workbench. At fifteen, he was earning a little money by his new trade, and as fast as he earned it, was proudly turning it into the family treasury.

As for book learning, there were the few months spent in the district school every winter. There were the hours when rain and snow made it impossible to go to school or to work on the farm, but which his mother seized upon to help the boys with their studies. There were also the long evenings before the fireplace when James lost himself in reading the few books lined up neatly on a shelf in the cabin, particularly the one called *The Pirate's Own Book*—or some such name. That volume he read over and over again. In his own mind he ate with those pirates, slept with them, faced every narrow blood-curdling escape that they faced, and buried countless treasures in the dead of the night in their brave company.

With all those tales very real and live to him, he strode out across country from his own little pioneer home town of Orange to his uncle's farm lying close to Lake Erie. There he chopped that hundred cords of wood, dreamed dreams of sailing his own ship some day, and then returned home to tell his mother that he simply could not stand life on the farm any longer. But he did stand it long enough to help and store the hay, before he tied up his few belongings, swung them on a stout stick over his shoulder, and was off to find his fortune sailing the seas.

Instead, he found a hot-headed rough old captain on a boat at the Cleveland dock who sent him fairly tumbling off deck with a volley of oaths that made the blood run cold in the boy's veins. While that encounter somewhat

cooled his enthusiasm for living the life of a sailor, he still longed for a boat of some kind. Finally he decided a canal boat was better than nothing, so he took a job on one which hauled coal from the mines up the canal to Cleveland. Even then he did not get much experience as a boatman since he was kept driving the horse along the canal path. In addition, in the few times he was on that boat he fell overboard, by actual count, fourteen times. Then he began having ague—that chill and fever so miserably frequent in Ohio pioneer life—shaking and chattering with cold one minute and burning with fever the next.

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THAT was too much even for James Garfield. So he went back home, resolved to forget all about the sea, to study, and to become a teacher. He stuck to that resolution through poverty and hard work, until, a few years later, he found himself teaching a country school at twelve dollars a month, plus his board. Encouraged by that, he studied at Western Reserve Eclectic Institute, now Hiram College, working at the same time and saving his money. When he had three hundred dollars he concluded he was equipped to enter Williams College. He did so, stayed through the four years, and graduated in 1856. He was then twenty-five. After that he went back to Hiram, this time as a professor of ancient languages and literature. Later he was made president of that college.

But his early years of teaching at Hiram were the years when every thinking man in the United States had his eyes on the Kansas slavery struggle and young Garfield was among them. Not only did he have his eyes on the trouble, but he decided it was his place to say what he thought about it. To that end he entered Ohio politics, soon became known as a

very effective speaker, and, as a reward for his work, was elected to the Ohio State Senate in 1859.

Like all of his fellows in the Senate chamber, he was, of course, actively opposed to slavery. But, also like many of them, he believed that the United States government had no right to interfere with slavery in any of the states where it already existed. Later, however, when secession finally came, he, with his associates, urged that government's right to defend federal power and possessions within those states. Therefore, when President Lincoln called for 75,000 troops, Senator Garfield introduced a motion that Ohio furnish 20,000 of these troops together with $3,000,000, as her part towards bringing the seceding states to obedience.

On top of that, he, himself, although just admitted to the bar and needing to begin his practice, immediately enlisted. He was given a commission as lieutenant colonel, then, a little later, one as colonel of the forty-second Ohio volunteer regiment—a regiment largely enrolled from his old students. At the head of this regiment, he went down into Kentucky, then on to the South, was promoted in 1862 to the rank of brigadier general of volunteers, fought at the battle of Shiloh, became, in 1863, chief of staff under General Rosencrantz in the army of the Cumberland and fought so gallantly at Chickamauga that he was made major general of volunteers for his gallant action.

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While he had been fighting, however, his Ohio Republican friends had decided that he was more needed back of the lines than he was at the front. They had, therefore, in 1862 elected him to the United States Congress, with the result that the next year Garfield resigned his post in the

war to take his seat in the House of Legislature at Washington. There he joined the group of Republicans who stood for a most severe treatment of the Confederates as opposed to President Lincoln's desire to move kindly and slowly.

As time passed Garfield became more and more favorably known in the House as a hard worker, a good speaker, and a clever leader. Reelected over and again, despite the fact that his name was involved in the scandals of President Grant's administration, he continued to keep his seat until 1880, when Ohio elected him United States senator.

That was also the year for presidential election. Still further, it was the year of General Grant's return from his trip around the world during which he had been received with the highest honor—honor which America felt redounded to her glory as well. Therefore, when Grant reached home he was received with such overwhelming enthusiasm as to cause certain Republican leaders to conclude that he could be elected as a third-term president.

Immediately, those leaders—called Stalwarts—306 of them from New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, arrived at the National Republican Convention determined to place General Grant at the head of their ticket. Whereupon, other leaders—one group supporting James G. Blaine, another John Sherman—set up a strong opposition, not so much to General Grant as to any man running for a third term. Thirty-five ballots were cast without any one of the candidates receiving a sufficient number of votes to nominate him. At the end of that time somebody proposed the name of James A. Garfield. The two factions agreed, and he was nominated with Chester A. Arthur, one of the New York leaders, as vice-president.

The campaign that followed was a vigorous one for James Garfield. Accusations against him in connection with corrupt dealings going on in Washington during President Grant's time were spread far and wide. Attempts were made to swing Western votes away from him by saying he was opposed to excluding the Chinese from the United States. Although nobody really believes either of these things now, they gave the Republican party a stiff fight in 1880. In the end, however, James Garfield won by 215 electoral votes, as against 155 for his Democratic opponent, General Winfield Scott Hancock.

The outlook, however, was not very bright for the new president. The country had been affected more or less by the fight against him. Even his own party had never united wholly, let alone enthusiastically, for him, because of the bitterness still hanging over after the fight at the nominating convention. To increase that bitterness, President Garfield appointed James G. Blaine, enemy of the Stalwarts, his secretary of state, and made William Robertson, another enemy of that Republican group, collector of the port of New York.

Whether he could have pulled the quarreling factions together, whether his work as president would have won him fame in the end, nobody ever will know. But what everybody does know is that all party differences—Democratic and Republican alike—were forgotten when, four months after his inauguration, President Garfield, while in a Washington railway station ready to start for the graduation exercises at his old college, was shot by Charles Guiteau, a disappointed office seeker. Still further, all Americans hold as one of their finest memories, the gallant fight James Garfield made through the long weeks of suffering that followed, until his death in September, 1881.

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CHESTER ALAN ARTHUR

No president ever took his inaugural oath standing more alone than Chester A. Arthur. In the first place, the country was too absorbed in its grief over President Garfield's long weeks of suffering, to give much time to thinking of the man who now had to pick up the loose ends of an administration just begun and by no means begun smoothly. Many of those who did stop to think of him stood far off and questioning; some were even downright unfriendly. Did the tall, handsome, cultured, very well-groomed man feel this aloofness? If so, did he care; and if he cared, what could he do to win the trust and support of the American people?

If he did care, then he must have felt the loneliness of his position all the more because he had never before stood so by himself in all of his fifty-one years. In fact, he had always been surrounded by friends—hosts of them. To be sure he had had everything in his life to help make him attractive and to give him that confidence in himself which was now helping him to stand in quiet reserved dignity before a questioning nation. His father, a graduate of Belfast College, Ireland, had brought all of the polish, all of the warm personality of an Irish gentleman over to America where he quickly made a real place for himself as a teacher and preacher. Then he married Malvonia Stone and they established a home in Union, Vermont, where Chester was born in 1830—just one year before James Garfield opened his eyes for the first time out in the Ohio pioneer cabin.

Certainly the two boys who were later to come together as the two leading men of their country, started life very



Chester A. Arthur

differently. While James was bending his young back over chopping, planting, sawing—and reading his stories of blood-thirsty pirates, Chester was going to school very properly, first to the village school, then to a preparatory school at Schenectady before entering Union College to graduate with honors at eighteen. That was about the age Garfield determined to forget his dreams of the sea and get down to the business of educating himself.

All through his school life Chester Arthur was popular, with friends by the score both among his schoolmates and his teachers. Active, pleasant-mannered, he kept right on being popular. After leaving college, he, like Garfield, taught for a while. Then, also like him, Arthur studied law. He finished that course and was admitted to the bar in 1854—when he was twenty-four—a year younger than Garfield was when he graduated from college.

And at the time when slavery was occupying everybody's mind in the East just as it was in the West. That is probably why Chester Arthur's first law case attracted so much attention. That case had to do with the rights of a slave owner in a free state to retain the ownership of a slave traveling with him. Arthur argued that the owner would lose his rights of possession—that the negro would become free as soon as he stepped on free soil. He won his case, and the decision was upheld in a higher court. Later he attracted attention again by arguing that a negro paying his fare to ride on a New York City street car had the right to sit wherever he pleased on that car and to be treated the same as a white man while on it. He won that case also.

These two cases alone, because of the public interest in everything connected with slavery, were enough to bring Chester Arthur fame as a lawyer. In the meantime, his shrewd political sense had also proved enough to

establish him as one of New York's leading young Republicans. Because of this latter position, as well as because of an interest in military affairs, the governor of New York made Arthur engineer-in-chief of his staff. When the Civil War began calling for supplies, he was made quartermaster general with the responsibility of seeing that New York's 700,000 soldiers were fed, sheltered, and clothed.

He did that work exceedingly well; but he did it as an appointee of a Republican governor whom he had helped to elect. When that governor went out and a new one came in, Arthur lost his place to a politician supporting the incoming governor. Following that, he went back to his law office and stayed there increasing his practice but still keeping a hold on political affairs until after the close of the Civil War and General Grant's nomination for president. In the campaign that followed, Chester Arthur worked early and late to elect Grant. What is more he worked with the power of a recognized leader. Quite naturally, therefore—and according to custom—President Grant rewarded him by giving him the very important post of collector of customs in the port of New York.

Chester Arthur made a very efficient, hard-working collector. But he also made himself a very troublesome one, later, to President Hayes when that president began a sweeping reform in the United States Civil Service. Because New York City had its own particular way of ignoring that service, and the nation, at large, had grown tired of that way, the President appointed a special commission to investigate the work of the New York port. As a result of that investigation, a complete change of officers was recommended and President Hayes asked for Chester Arthur's resignation.

But Arthur refused to resign. What is more, Roscoe Conkling, powerful Republican United States senator, defended him so successfully that he held his position until the Senate adjourned. During that adjournment, however, the collector was removed—removed, not because his work had ever been unsatisfactory but because he had used the spoils system in filling the offices of his department. To be sure the collector before him—so Arthur claimed—had removed seven men to his one. Nevertheless, the people of the country, in a great fever of reform, did not pay much attention to Arthur's claims—unless it was to watch him all the more carefully.

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None of this, however, affected Arthur's standing with the New York Republican leaders. They, therefore, went right on to elect him delegate to the famous Republican National Convention of 1880. Of course, he appeared there as one of the New York Stalwarts determined to have General Grant for a third term. And he must have been in high favor with the Grant supporters, for when the Stalwarts had to yield to the opposing factions and Garfield was finally nominated for president, those factions, to pacify the Eastern political bosses, also nominated Chester A. Arthur vice-president.

Altogether, therefore, as Garfield had also found, the new administration did not face a very bright future. The President, as a "dark horse," was not even able to count on the united support of his own party. The Vice-president was in much the same position for he was really only acceptable to one faction of his party, while the country itself knew him chiefly in connection with the shady New York port situation. To complicate matters still further,

Vice-president Arthur worked with Roscoe Conkling as directly against President Garfield in the appointment of the President's secretary of state and the collector of customs of the New York port. That opposition, that affiliation with the objectionable New York leaders, brought all the old charges against Arthur vividly before the nation once more.

That was the situation when Charles Guiteau fired on James Garfield that July day, 1881. And that situation was the reason for the American people's standing far off and questioning when Chester A. Arthur took his oath of office. That was the reason he stood alone; not only alone but hurt—very deeply hurt—by certain unfriendly press notices of him and his inauguration. Was all of that why he straightened his shoulders, lifted his eyes to the goal of real service, and swung off towards that goal with all of his splendid ability?

Perhaps so. At any rate the doubting nation soon found occasion to take heart over the evident purpose of the new President to give the United States a clear-cut, just, administration free from the friction of party factions. He appointed men who were fitted to serve—splendid men. He supported the bill which brought back into force the authority given General Grant for use in Civil Service reform. He vetoed a bill excluding the Chinese from America for thirty years, and also, one calling for an $18,000,000 appropriation for river and harbor improvement. In response to the urgent demand of Congress, he recommended the repeal of certain taxes, the reduction of postage from three cents to two, the extension of the fast mail and free delivery systems and the initiation of special delivery service. In foreign affairs, a commercial treaty was arranged with Mexico. Another was drawn up, but not

ratified, with Nicaragua, concerning a canal to be constructed across that country.

Also, during this administration the three great transcontinental railways, so long in construction, were finally completed. Altogether, after it once got under way the Garfield-Arthur presidency marked the first period of smooth advance in national prosperity following the destructive years of the Civil War. As a result, the close of his term, therefore, found the American people standing largely with, and back of, Chester A. Arthur instead of far off and doubting.

That increasing popularity caused his name to be proposed to head the Republican ticket in 1884. But party feeling was still bitter against many of the policies he had supported. The old split of the previous convention had not been forgotten. The result was that he ended his public service when his one term as president ended. Following that he went back to his old law practice in New York. He died in November, 1886—less than ten years after leaving the White House.

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RIGHT was right, wrong was wrong in the Cleveland family. There was never any middle ground where one might hesitate, halt, or take off into a shadier path. Not for the Clevelands. What was more, everyone of them expected every other one to do what was right—to do it as a matter of course and, therefore, without any praise. But with that expectancy went a deep respect and strong love that managed to keep the family very generally kind, just, and understanding, not only toward one another but toward their neighbors as well.

For the Clevelands were of good old staunch Saxon blood, unyielding as an English oak, but also like an oak, reliable, reassuring, protecting. Moses was the first of the name to leave England and to land in Massachusetts in 1635. After him came five Aarons before the family turned from the Bible to choose more modern names. Certainly an inheritance of such blood, such fidelity, and high sense of honor promised well for the Union now, in 1885, just swinging clear of nearly a half century of bitter conflict—just striding out and ahead towards a broad development.

No branch of the Cleveland family could ever have claimed a stronger strain of that old Saxon blood than the one headed by Richard Falley Cleveland, Grover Cleveland's father. A Yale man, graduating with high honors, he upheld the religious faith of his whole family by studying for the ministry, being ordained, and accepting charge of a Congregational church. Perhaps it was just as well to have the sternness of that inheritance softened somewhat, as it must have been when Richard Cleveland married



Grover Cleveland

Ann Neal of Irish and French ancestry. For she came into the young minister's home bringing with her a few gay colored gowns, some glittering jewelry—and a devoted colored maid. To be sure, she soon saw she couldn't keep any of these—at least not if her young husband kept the support of his parish.

So Ann Cleveland gave them all up—but she did it cheerfully, which meant much in making the home, then and always, one of culture, self-sacrifice, and freedom from friction; even if it never was to be free from poverty.

The fact that that home was never very long in one place did not seem to bother the Clevelands greatly. They had already moved from Windham, Connecticut, to Portsmouth, Virginia, and from Portsmouth up to Caldwell, New Jersey, before Grover was born in March, 1837. When he was four, they packed up their belongings again; for Richard Cleveland had been made pastor of Fayetteville, New York.

At Fayetteville life began in real earnest for small Grover Cleveland. There were his Bible verses to be committed to memory—and to be followed as far as a small boy could follow them. And there, very early, were lessons to be studied under his father's direction—stiff Latin passages and equally stiff problems in arithmetic—necessary to help him when he entered Fayetteville Academy where the older children were already going. Besides all of that—there were long hours of play, for Richard and Ann Cleveland meant that their children should not grow up too seriously. No doubt it was those hours of play that made Grover Cleveland remember Fayetteville with so much real affection throughout all of his life.

But after nine years in Fayetteville, the heavy parish work there, together with the never-ending struggle to

feed and clothe a family of eleven on six hundred dollars a year, proved too much for Richard Cleveland and his health began to break. When, therefore, he was offered a new position in Clinton, New York, with a salary of a thousand dollars a year, he picked up his household and moved on to that town. Aside from the increase in salary, the whole Cleveland family were glad to transfer their home to Clinton because Hamilton College was there, promising a broader chance for study than Fayetteville.

Grover had barely started his work in that college, with every hope of going straight on until graduation, when family needs became so pressing that he had to stop and begin to earn money. To do that he went back to Fayetteville to clerk in a small store and to be paid all of fifty dollars for his first year's service and one hundred for the second. To be sure he also was given his board, which in those long ago days, meant sleeping in a room without any heat on the coldest of winter nights, meant getting up at five in the morning to run out across the square to a town watering trough to break the ice and then, shivering, to scrub his face and neck before racing on to the store to build the fire and sweep out.

The boy kept this work up for two years, all the time believing he would go back sometime to finish at Hamilton College. He did go back to Clinton at the end of that time, but shortly afterwards his father, whose health had continued to fail, had to give up his position there and take an easier one at Holland Patent not far from Utica. The family were barely settled there and Richard Cleveland had preached only three Sundays in the village church, when he suddenly died. Grover heard the news shouted out by a newsboy as he sat in a carriage waiting for his sister to finish shopping in Utica.

Added to the shock and deep grief over his father's death—a father whom he loved as tenderly as he respected and obeyed him—Grover Cleveland faced the keen disappointment of giving up all further work at Hamilton College. He was then sixteen. He was without a cent of his own in the world as he had added every dollar he earned to the family income. Since that family meant much to him, he tried to find work near home. He thought, perhaps, he could teach the blind so he joined his brother at the New York City Institution for the Blind. But he was not long deciding that he had made a mistake. At last, discouraged on all sides, he borrowed twenty-five dollars and started west.

Because Cleveland, Ohio, had been named in honor of a relative of his, he made that city his goal. On the way, however, he stopped to visit an uncle near Buffalo. That uncle was a breeder of fine cattle. He offered the boy work on a herd book. The boy accepted, earned sixty dollars clear, and decided to stay on in Buffalo. Long years before, he had made up his mind to study law. His uncle now found a way for him to do that by securing him a position as clerk, with time to study, in the law office of a friend. And there Grover Cleveland stayed, stubbornly poring over great volumes of law, stubbornly conquering one volume after another, until, four years later, he triumphed by being admitted to the bar.

That was in 1859. Two years later Fort Sumter fell and young men the country over found their life plans really meant nothing compared to the life of the Union. When, finally, the call for enlistment came, the three Cleveland brothers looked at each other and then at their mother—still sacrificing herself, still cheerful, still without money. Somebody had to take care of her. The boys drew lots. Grover drew the one that kept him at home.

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So during all of those tragic war days, Grover Cleveland was in Buffalo working away to establish his law practice. At the same time he was allying himself with the Democratic party of Erie County as against his uncle and most of his friends who were supporting the new Republican ticket. But while working for the advance of his party, he seems to have had no thought of doing so to further his own interests. Certainly he made no effort to secure office, then, or ever. Instead, office came to him.

The first time that happened was in 1863, when he was twenty-six and was appointed assistant district attorney of Erie County. Two years later his political friends—probably without his knowledge, certainly without his request—nominated him for district attorney. He was defeated by one of his own best friends. Not at all disgruntled over the outcome, Cleveland went back to his own private practice, this time as partner in one of Buffalo's best-known law firms.

Only a few years later, when he was thirty, he had reached the place in his practice where he was earning enough to live simply and contentedly. Apparently he had no particular ambition to gain wealth or fame. In fact then, as always, he seemed to want to avoid the responsibility connected with a fortune or with high office. He wanted, instead, freedom to live as he liked to live—freedom to work long hard hours, but also freedom to see his friends, to fish alongside quiet streams, and to go hunting in all sorts of weather.

Into this quiet life, in 1870, his Democrat friends brought their proposal that he run for sheriff of Erie County. He refused. His friends insisted. Whereupon, Cleveland

stopped to think that, maybe, after all he would better think the matter over. If he were elected, he could save a little money—which up to that time he had never been able to do. He would have more time to read and study. Maybe, also, he could really do something worth while for the people of Erie County. That last thought had great weight with the son of Richard Cleveland.

So he consented to run for sheriff. He was elected. It is not on record that the new place brought much to him personally in savings or self-improvement. But it is very much on record what he did for Erie County; also what he did not do to meet the hopes of his Democrat friends. Those friends had just been waiting for the day when their candidate would be elected and thus give them a chance at the spoils which their Republican opponent had been gathering in for years.

But Grover Cleveland had other ideas of public service. Although always very free in spending his own money, he now showed himself as unceasingly cautious about spending that of the people who had elected him. No man, no matter how influential a Democrat he might be, no matter how hard he had worked to elect the new Sheriff had a ghost of a chance for favors unless he could prove that his ability to serve was fitted to the position he wanted. Even then, if a man of equal ability bid lower than the Democrat friend—that man was given the job. Grover Cleveland believed in good bargains for his people. What is more he got them.

For that reason he went back to his law at the end of his term as sheriff with even a fairer reputation for fearless honesty than when he accepted that title. Again settling down to his practice, he steadily advanced to become—at the end of eight years—one of the outstanding men of his

profession in western New York. Then, again, because he was popular as a man, because he was sound as a lawyer, because he was known as an honest politician, Buffalo Democrats saw in him the one who might be strong enough to overthrow the long-established Republican power in their city.

In 1881 Cleveland was, therefore, nominated for mayor of Buffalo. The election showed how tired the city really was of extravagance and loose business methods in ruling; for Cleveland won. With the same fearless independence of his own party leaders that he had shown when sheriff, he now proceeded to clean up Buffalo's city government. Good business methods took the place of poor ones. Clean-cut organization of city departments took the place of slipshod methods. In short, Grover Cleveland's city prospered under him as his county had done.

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Once more his fame spread—spread so far that in the very same year which saw him elected mayor of Buffalo, his party decided to see whether they could not elect him governor of the state of New York. They found that they not only could, but that through various splits in the Republican ranks, together with Cleveland's unquestioned hold on the people, their man was swept into office by the unheard-of plurality of 192,850. As governor, Grover Cleveland applied the same fundamental principles of honesty that had won him fame as sheriff and mayor. His party leaders found no favor unless they could serve public welfare. He saw to it that a good Civil Service Law further safeguarded public office. All bills were just as laboriously measured by the Governor as the load of wood delivered to the county jail had been years before. If a bill

was found to lack what the people should have through its passage—Grover Cleveland unhesitatingly, fearlessly, vetoed it.

Instead of killing him politically, this use of his executive power won him high regard. That is why the national Democratic party saw good presidential timber in him in 1884. That is why they determined to place all their hope on him in their effort to dislodge the national Republican party after that party had been continuously in power for twenty-three years. So they nominated him for president. After that, Democratic leaders were shrewd enough to build their campaign, very generally, of the same planks that Cleveland had used in constructing his own political career. Those were the reform of departments wherever reform was needed; the filling of offices on merit; the establishment of a sound and safe financial system; the fair treatment for the laboring man and consideration for the rights of American industries.

Since those planks met pretty much all the demands of the American people, not only at that time but for several presidential administrations before, Grover Cleveland's campaign had a good start. The fight that followed, however, was a stiff and bitter one. Much political mud was thrown and thrown freely. Even in the end, the vote was very close.

But Grover Cleveland again won the victory. Anyone who knew then or knows now, the constant training for honesty and high, fair dealing he had received as a boy, anyone who had followed his public career up to the time he became president, would know that as Chief Executive of the United States he would go right on applying principles to national service that he had found satisfactory in state, county, and city. For his first four years, he worked hard to secure a Civil Service which would be free from all

party influence. To do that, he favored what is known as the Pendleton Bill which demanded that subordinate service be organized and that all appointments and promotions be made on the basis of ability revealed in examinations. This bill applied at first to clerkships; but the president had the power to add other offices from time to time. He used that power to add 11,757 in these first four years.

As when governor of New York, so now as president, Cleveland used the veto power fearlessly and frequently. One of the bills he refused to approve was the Dependent Pension Bill through which, if passed, he saw possibilities of great loss to the United States Treasury. He attacked severely the protection of home industries by high tariff. He insisted on studying for himself a plea for fair treatment made by an Indian Chief. And with all of this, he greatly offended his own party leaders. He also alarmed them, so that, although they re-nominated him, they, probably, did not handle their second campaign for him with as much vigor as they had the first four years before. In the end, Grover Cleveland was defeated by the Republican candidate Benjamin Harrison.

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AGAIN he returned to his law practice—this time to a New York office. Defeat did not make him unhappy. On the other hand he was glad of the freedom it brought him to go on his beloved hunting and fishing excursions, to add to his income—still needing to be increased—and to have leisure to enjoy his own home, and his child Ruth, of whom at her birth, he wrote to a friend,

> "I have just entered the real world, and see in a small child more of value than I have ever called my own."

But he was not to have that freedom for long. There was the question of tariff needing to be answered. There was also the one of sound money. Grover Cleveland had expressed himself freely on both and in a way that apparently appealed to the American people. In consequence he was nominated for president again in 1892.

And was elected—the only man so far in the history of the United States to be reelected as president following the intervention of another man's administration. The years of his second term were certainly stormy ones. The whole country was in an uproar over the silver and tariff questions. President Cleveland considered the Sherman Silver Act of Harrison's administration chiefly to blame for the unsettled financial situation spreading over the land. He, therefore, called a special session of Congress and by the very force of his will compelled both House and Senate to repeal the Sherman Act. That done, the President turned his attention to the tariff and directed the forming of a bill which he felt would reduce the high duties laid on imported articles. By the time the House and Senate finished amending the bill to suit themselves, Cleveland found it so opposite to his ideas that he refused to sign it although he allowed it to become a law without his signature.

But his work on neither the silver or the tariff question came soon enough to end the nation's financial troubles. The stock of gold in the Federal Treasury was being used to meet current debts. People grew alarmed and rushed to exchange their legal tender notes for gold. The government began to borrow. Bonds amounting to $162,000,000 were issued. Because of all this, business became unsettled, wages were lowered, and labor troubles arose.

Among the last was the Pullman strike beginning in Chicago and spreading out to the Pacific coast. Cleveland—

after waiting what seemed to him an inexcusably long time for the Illinois governor to settle the trouble—ordered federal troops to clear the way for trains to run as usual. Those troops took just one day to disperse the mobs and one week to break the strike.

To add to these internal troubles—there was the annexation of Hawaii to vex his soul. With his sense of fair play for the weak as well as the strong he could not think it was just to take away the right of Hawaii to have its own rule. He, therefore, withdrew President Harrison's Hawaiian treaty from the Senate and tried—unsuccessfully—to restore the old government.

The same desire to protect weak governments from those who were stronger, led him to send a special message to Congress, December, 1895, warning that body of Great Britain's threatened infringement of the Monroe Doctrine in her boundary trouble between British Guiana and Venezuela. For a time following that warning, American relations with Great Britain grew very strained. The trouble, however, was finally adjusted in a way to permit both England and the United States to maintain their national dignity.

Through all of these troublesome years, Grover Cleveland never, for one second, failed to use to the full the power his inaugural oath gave him. He looked upon the authority of the president as second to none. And since he did consider it so, he was the commanding figure in the center of every struggle. Even with his strong body and active mind, he must have been weary enough to rest at the end of his second term. Besides there was his love of his own freedom always making private life welcome.

That life was taken up in Princeton, New Jersey, where he found a deep interest in the University, and where

people from far and wide came to consult him. Towards his seventy-first birthday, he began to break. Not long after that day, he sent back to his old home for one of the worn hymn books his father had used for family prayers when the family were all together. Then he set the affairs of his life carefully in order. That done, he went on his way, saying:

"I have tried so hard to do right."

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Love for the American flag was born and bred in the very bones of Benjamin Harrison. That love was, also, the sort that gave fully and freely in service to the country over which that flag flew. Away back in the blood-stirring days of 1776, there had been a Benjamin Harrison, Speaker of the Virginia House of Burgesses, governor of the same state, and member of the Continental Congress, whose name stands among those of other Virginians who signed the Declaration of Independence. The son of that sturdy patriot was no less a person than William Henry Harrison, friend of the West, hero of Tippecanoe, and ninth president of the United States.

As a man who loved the Middle West plains, William Henry Harrison took up a tract of land lying along the Ohio, and established a home for his family there. It was his son, John Scott Harrison, who was the father of the second Benjamin Harrison, twenty-third president of the United States. John Scott, himself, although a good, active citizen of his country, did not care much for politics or political parties. To be sure he served as a member of the national House of Representatives; but he refused to run for lieutenant governor of Ohio because he believed that much of the trouble leading up to the Civil War was due to the fight between political parties. A very generous, courteous, broad-minded, well-informed man, he naturally loved to entertain extensively. For a time, the broad acres inherited from his father's estate made it possible for him to do this much as he liked. But his friends, his hospitality, and his lack of really practical management finally left him too poor to keep up his old manner of living.



Samuel Bernard Schaffer

Benj Harrison

Therefore, there wasn't a great deal of money left in the family by the time Benjamin Harrison was born, on the old farm, near North Bend, Ohio, in 1833. There he spent all of his early years, working out in the fields and studying in a small schoolhouse on his father's land. Later, he went to Farmer's College, near Cincinnati, for two years, and then on to Miami University where he graduated when he was nineteen. A year later he was admitted to the bar.

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SINCE his father's land extended west to touch the Indiana boundary, the Harrisons were considered among the founders of that state quite as much as of Ohio. Benjamin, therefore, decided to trust his future to Indiana and so traveled up to take his chances in Indianapolis. To be sure, he had only one friend in that town but that friend permitted him to use a desk in one corner of his office.

There, the fair-haired, simply dressed, quiet young fellow began his practice. He earned his first money, $2.50 a day, as a crier of the federal court. When his first case was tried, he appeared for his argument, modest and nervous. Those were the days of candles. Young lawyer Harrison found only one flickering flame on his desk. He moved it this way and that, but unable to read his notes, he finally shoved candle, papers, and all to one side and began to speak directly to the judge and jury. To his great delight he found he not only could speak without embarrassment, but that he could recall every necessary fact for his plea.

With such a start, he, of course, went on with confidence, in his own ability. Before long he had a good practice. But even so, he and his young wife had to go to housekeeping in a home made up of a combination kitchen and living room, one bedroom, and a lean-to shed. Perhaps that was

one reason why he decided to try to increase his income. At any rate he ran for Supreme Court reporter—and was elected. But that campaign was in 1860. Between his election and the time for him to begin serving, Abraham Lincoln's call for an army to defend the Union rang out over the land.

Of course, coming from the family he did, anyone would know what Benjamin Harrison would do. He began by raising his own company with a commission of second lieutenant. He was promoted to colonel of the Seventieth Regiment of Indiana Volunteers and sent down into Kentucky. There he showed particular skill as a drill master. Later he distinguished himself in several battles and took part in Sherman's attack on Atlanta. By 1865, he had won sufficient recognition to be commissioned brevet lieutenant general.

Then the war ended and he was free to return to his law practice in Indiana. In the meantime, because of his entering the army and staying there, his election to the office of Supreme Court reporter several years before, had done him no good. In fact, that office had, shortly after, been declared vacant. To be sure, in 1864, his Republican friends had reelected him with a very gratifying majority, but even then, he refused to take up the work of that office until the war was won and he was mustered out.

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With his inherited political sense, with his memory of long and frequent discussions of government affairs in his own father's home, it could not be expected that Benjamin Harrison would keep out of public service. Of course, with a loyalty born of his Civil War experience, he devoted himself to the election of General Grant as president,

in both 1868 and 1872. He, himself, however, was defeated when he ran for governor in 1876. Two years later, he presided over his state convention, and two years after that, was chairman of the state delegation at the Chicago national convention. There, he worked to nominate Garfield. In turn, Garfield offered Harrison a place in his cabinet which Harrison refused because of his election to the United States Senate.

As a senator he showed the same keen interest in the development of the West that his grandfather, William Henry Harrison, had shown. He served on the Committee of Military and Indian Affairs and tried to get North and South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and Washington admitted as states. Although he failed to get that accomplished then, he did see those territories come into the Union in his own administration.

At the end of his six years in the Senate, he was defeated when he ran for reelection. But he had only a few months back in his law office before the Republican party nominated him for president—to run against Grover Cleveland. Friendly, courteous, cautiously safe on the question of tariff, he was elected. And a second Harrison took up the lead in national government.

Also a Harrison that had a chance to do what his grandfather's death, a month after taking the presidential oath, had not had a chance to do—that was to give the United States a very vigorously progressive administration. The Cleveland tariff controversy was continued and settled, temporarily at least, by the passage of the McKinley Tariff Bill. The Sherman silver bill did the same, also for the time being, for the "sound money" question. Civil Service reform—another burning issue—progressed satisfactorily. The navy was enlarged.

In addition to crowding all of these domestic matters into his administration, Benjamin Harrison did much to advance the position of the United States with foreign governments. To further friendly relations with neighboring governments, a Pan-American Congress was held at Washington. In accordance with a clause of the McKinley Tariff Bill, commercial reciprocity was established with several American and European nations. Controversies with Chile, with Germany over the Samoa Islands, and with Great Britain over the seal-fur industry along the Behring Sea, were all adjusted.

As a whole, the second Harrison president accomplished much to advance industry, to reduce public debt, and to place the United States government in a better position with world powers. But he did not do enough, evidently, to loosen Grover Cleveland's hold on the country. As a result—partly because of the serious labor difficulties arising after the development of Republican high tariff policy—Benjamin Harrison was defeated by Cleveland in the presidential election of 1893.

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Once more, he returned to Indianapolis. But even then, he was not to be left alone to enjoy his own life quietly there. Perhaps, he preferred not to be left alone. At any rate, he was asked to serve as chief counsel at Venezuela in connection with the boundary trouble between that country and British Guiana. He accepted. He also accepted an appointment as delegate to the Peace Conference held at The Hague in 1899. Only two years later, he died at his home in Indianapolis—March, 1901. Surely he lived his sixty-eight years worthy of the Harrison family.

Chapter X

DEFENDING WEAK NEIGHBORS

I. WILLIAM MCKINLEY

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ONE day back in the nineties of the last century, a pleasant-faced man stood at the head of an immense dining-room looking out over the bowed heads of one thousand orphan boys and girls muttering their brief blessing over the noonday meal. As they looked up, the man began to speak. He spoke with deep feeling, for those boys and girls were the children of Civil War soldiers. The man speaking had marched many a mile, fought many a battle with their fathers. At the close of his speech, he stepped forward as if he wanted to come very near to them, and said:

> "If ever I can do anything for any one of you, will you come to me?"

In that thousand was a thin, tall, awkward girl who remembered what the speaker said. Several years later, she graduated from that home, found her way to Washington, then to the White House, and, because she was very persistent, into the presence of the President himself. That President was the speaker of years before. The girl told him she needed help. She told him what she thought she could do—if she had a chance. He gave her that chance. She made good.

That man was William McKinley, governor of Ohio, at the time of that noonday speech, president of the United States when that girl appealed to him for her right to live and work as she knew she could and should. Perhaps it was his dogged, Scotch persistence which kept him climbing the political ladder when once he saw things up higher he wanted to do. Perhaps it was his Irish blood that made him strike out hard whenever he had to fight to win. He had both of those national strains in him, for his father was Scotch-Irish, his mother of straight Scotch descent. The families on both sides, however, had lived in Pennsylvania for generations before traveling on to Ohio. There, many years later, William McKinley, father of the president, met and married Nancy Allison.

And it was in that state, in the small town of Niles, that William McKinley was born in 1843, the seventh among nine brothers and sisters. His father was a hard-working foundryman. His mother also worked hard to make his small wages spread over the needs of her large family. Every one of the nine children had, therefore, to look out for himself from the time he could walk. Every one of the older ones had also to do his share of looking after the younger ones as well as helping to carry wood and water, run errands, and make himself generally useful. There were no shirks allowed in the McKinley family.

But busy as the father and mother must have been, they still found time to see that their whole nine growing, active boys and girls went to school. And attended to business when they went. They also saw that the whole family went to church and Sunday school and grew up with the right sort of reverence for Bible teaching.

In between all of these numerous demands of work, study, and religious training, the children could play where



William McKinley

and how they pleased just so long as they played a clean game. William seems to have found a fair amount of time to have a good time. He ran barefoot from the day the ice began to melt in the spring until the first snow fell in the fall. He played marbles, flew kites, pitched and batted in the neighborhood nine, and swam for hours in the old swimming hole of Yellow Creek.

In the midst of those busy days, the McKinleys decided that Poland, Ohio, had better schools than Niles. Therefore, when William was nine, they all moved on to that town. There he went to the Poland Union Seminary, debated, particularly shone in the languages, and, quite unusual for a boy of his kind, found he liked and understood poetry. He kept on at the seminary for eight years. By that time he was prepared to enter the junior class of Allegheny College at Meadville, Pennsylvania. But, because he studied too hard and his health broke, or because he needed to earn money—or both—he left that college before he graduated. He went back to Poland, found a country school needing a teacher, applied, and got the place.

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But the young man had no more than begun to earn the money so much needed, when the Civil War broke into his plans, as it did into the plans of every young man who had back of him what William McKinley had. All of his life he had heard tales of how his great-grandfather had fought in the American Revolution. Most of his life he had also listened to his parents and neighbors condemning slavery. There was no question in his mind or in that of the McKinley family about what he should do. He enlisted—and quickly—as a private in the Twenty-third Ohio Volunteer Infantry.

His regiment was ordered into Virginia. There he first won attention by risking his life to carry hot coffee and food to the fighting lines. For that he won his first promotion—that of second lieutenant. In the years following he won one promotion after another for gallant service until he reached the command of brevetted major of volunteers in 1865. During that time he also served on the staff of General Rutherford Hayes. Altogether he gave four full years as his share towards saving the Union and freeing the slaves. At the end of that time, despite sleeping anywhere, anyhow, despite the scant rations of army life, despite the long hours of marching and facing fire—William McKinley was mustered out a strong and active man with no sign left of the poor health of his college days.

With that new strength, he plunged into the study of law, went to the Albany Law School in New York to complete his course and was admitted to the bar two years after the war. That done, he established himself at Canton, Ohio, where he was to make his home the rest of his life. The very next year after opening his law office, came General Grant's campaign for the presidency. As a loyal soldier, William McKinley turned his back on his practice for long days at a time to work for his old Civil War commander's election.

He worked well enough to attract the attention of Republican leaders, and, in another year, to win for himself the election as prosecuting attorney. At the end of his term, however, he was defeated for reelection, and returned to his own practice of law. But not for long, since Governor Hayes, his own Ohio war general, came up for reelection. Again William McKinley threw his private work aside to make speeches, to meet with committees—in short, to give his whole time to work throughout that campaign.

And to cause the politicians of his state to begin to reckon with him as a man of power who knew how to speak simply, forcibly, and thus win his people.

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In 1876 those people decided to send him to Congress at Washington as Republican representative of his Ohio district. And did so in face of the fact that that district was strongly a Democratic one. Also, they continued to elect him until 1891—with the exception of only a few months in 1882.

In those fifteen years what did William McKinley do to make him stand out above his fellows? Because he had been born, and had grown up among manufacturing people, he was a firm believer in a high protective tariff. To give him the power to speak and act effectively for what he believed, he studied without ceasing all through those years. As a result of both experience and study, he became known as one of the best authorities of his time on industrial welfare and tariff. He debated earnestly and to the point on these topics; also on the silver question. He served on the Ways and Means Committee as both member and chairman.

Finally, William McKinley came to be looked upon as the Republican leader of the House of Representatives. Then, in 1890, he introduced his famous tariff bill, which piled up protective duties on imports until foreign countries bitterly opposed them and the feeling at home rose so strongly against him as to cause his defeat for reelection. If the clauses of the act having to do with reciprocity had been accepted by foreign trade as the supporters of the bill had thought they would be, the final effect on American industrial leaders might have been different. But the re-

jection of the whole policy of high tariff under the Cleveland administration, gave no one a chance to measure the full value of such treaties as were made under those clauses.

The outburst of criticism against this bill bearing his name, even though it did cost him his seat in Congress, gave William McKinley no great cause for political grief. The very next year he was elected governor of Ohio. He was reelected in 1895. In the meantime he continued active in the national party. By 1896, his hold on party and country was considered strong enough for the Republican convention to nominate him for president; and to include his policy of high tariff in the campaign platform.

That policy and the one for a gold standard, as against both gold and silver, were the chief issues argued for and against during the months following. The campaign was a wildly exciting one with William Jennings Bryan and his free-silver cause sweeping people off their feet. To be sure, William McKinley did not show much excitement. Instead of traveling hither and yon as Bryan was doing, he stayed quietly at home in Canton, and let people come to him. They came by thousands. He met them with simple, brief speeches. And he won the election.

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As president, William McKinley began by seeing that what he had promised to do was done. Through what is known as the Dingley Tariff Law, American industries were protected. The gold standard was firmly established by law. The Sherman Anti-trust Act helped the cause of small corporations against larger ones. Considerable progress was made towards curbing interstate railroads from showing favor in rates to larger prosperous business while refusing that favor to those really needing it.

All of this legislation to protect the weaker industries, while also being fair to the stronger ones, was quite in keeping with the understanding sympathy William McKinley had expressed that noonday when he offered to help any orphaned son or daughter of his old Civil War comrades. Maybe it was because he, himself, knew so well the price paid for that war that he stood so long hesitating to enter another.

For another war had begun to throw its threatening shadow over America as early as the first year of his administration. That shadow loomed up out of Spain's oppression of Cuba. During what seemed an endless number of months, the on-coming storm grew blacker, while the people of the United States waited uneasily, impatiently, for President McKinley to move. Tales of cruelty, of widespread oppression, continued to come from the Cubans. The battleship *Maine* was sent to Havana to protect American citizens on the island, and was sunk with her whole crew of 253 men. Even after that, nearly two months passed before the President finally yielded and Congress declared that "The people of Cuba are and of right ought to be free and independent."

That declaration, echoing down from 1776 to ring out loudly once more for a struggling people, acted like magic on the United States. Where people had opposed the war before, they now threw themselves heart and soul into helping to win it. Men who had long wanted to be off to the aid of the suffering islanders started for camps or to embark for immediate service.

Since that declaration was hurled against Spain, it involved the Spanish possessions in the Pacific as well as in the Atlantic. War was declared April 19, 1898. Early in the morning of the first day of May, Admiral Dewey

entered Manila harbor with his American fleet and set up a blockade while waiting for American troops to arrive and help take the city—which was done in August.

In the meantime the war was going on by sea and by land along the southeastern coast of America. The Spanish fleet there was defeated July third. In the face of terrible heat, of devastating fevers, of a lack of modern equipment, the American land forces fought their way on to Santiago and victory two weeks later.

By July 26, Spain was inquiring what America's terms of peace would be. She was told; and all fighting was ordered to cease. It was December, however, before the treaty of peace was finally signed. By its terms Spain gave up all claims to Cuba, ceded Porto Rico and other smaller islands to the United States, and, in turn, for $20,000,000, turned over the entire group of the Philippines to the United States government.

All of which meant that the United States, winning the war with Spain, had brought to herself new and heavy responsibilities in connection with all of these island people. To add to those responsibilities, a long-discussed question of Hawaiian government had been settled by the annexation of that group of islands. A section of the Samoan Islands also came under American control. Which all meant that the long, long years of confining herself to affairs within her own borders had ended for the United States. With increasing power and prosperity had come increasing demands—and, as always, those demands included a generous protection of a weak neighbor by a stronger one.

With this record back of him for one administration, William McKinley was nominated for a second term. And with him, for vice-president, Theodore Roosevelt, leader

of his Rough Riders in the brilliant Cuban victory of San Juan Hill. The campaign that followed showed that William McKinley was not popular with all of his people. He was accused of favoring capital over labor. He was also accused of having been too domineering in his policies connected with the government of the new island possessions. But against all of that stood the unquestioned prosperity of the whole country. Against it also stood the American government's understanding friendly relations with Great Britain—relations which had grown stronger during the delicate adjustments necessary because of the Spanish American War.

So, at the end of a vigorous campaign, William McKinley was reelected. Immediately Congress reached out to help Cuba set up her own government. Peace began to be established in the Philippines. Then, with those countries well on their way to a happy adjustment, the President decided to travel out through the United States, and thus come to know all of his own people better.

He took most of his cabinet with him. The party swung down through the South, leisurely, stopping along the way to talk with the people there and to do much toward removing the lingering feeling of bitter resentment left by the Civil War. On his way back, President McKinley went to Buffalo to visit the Pan-American Exposition. While he was attending a reception there, a young Polish anarchist, Leon Czolgosz, pushed through the crowd and shot him. He lived four days, while the nation waited with heavy hearts. When the news of his death flashed over the country, the grief shown everywhere by all classes was proof of the deep affection America had for William McKinley. That feeling extended over seas. In England, meetings were held to express the regard that country

had for him. Back in the United States, all business, at the hour of his burial, ceased, while men, women and children stood with bowed heads in a hushed silence. All political differences were forgotten. A brave man, a kind, understanding friend, had gone out of American life.

II. THEODORE ROOSEVELT

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AND in the hush of the nation's grief, Theodore Roosevelt stepped forth that September day from the vice-presidency to the presidency. No man ever took the oath of the president who was more thoroughly American than he. No man ever took that oath understanding better the various nationalities from which American citizens had come than he. Why shouldn't he have understood? In his own veins ran the blood of six of those nationalities—Holland Dutch, English, Scotch, Irish, French Huguenot, and a faint strain of German.

So far as understanding went, no man ever came to the president's chair who could enter more readily into the feelings of the Easterner, the Westerner, the Northerner, or the Southerner. He had lived with them all. He had shared their likes and dislikes. He had worked side by side with many of them for the common good of all in their own particular section.

Because of all of those ties made through inheritance, through environment, through active experience, Theodore Roosevelt stood very close that September day, not to one class alone, not to one part alone, but to all of his country alike. Did he, standing thus, feel more deeply than others, his responsibility to defend and protect the Constitution?

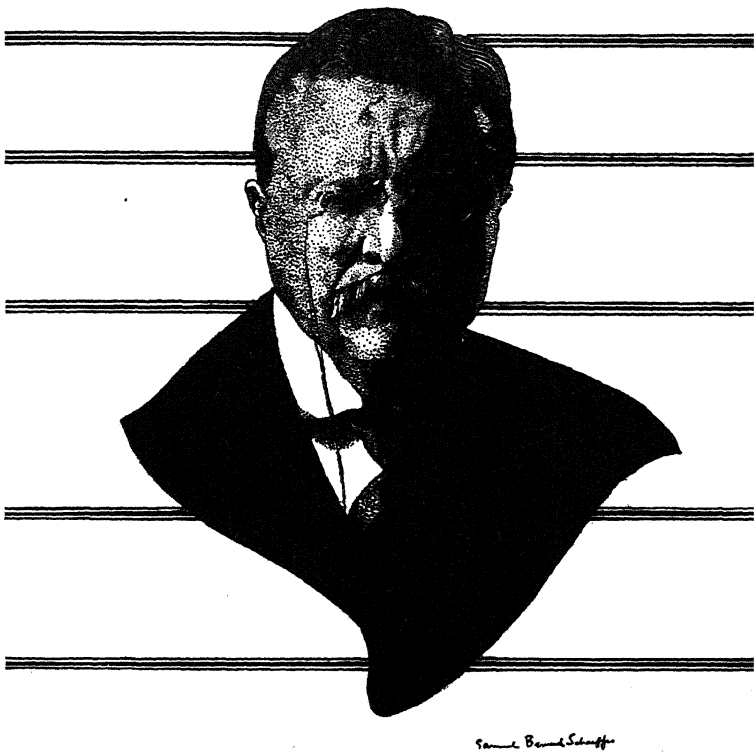
That would be hard to say. But at any rate no one could doubt the great sacredness of his oath to him. So far as defending his country went, he just naturally would have done that without any oath to bind him. All of the men—and women as well—of his family had stood ready to do that. On the Roosevelt side those men and women had come from Holland to settle in New Amsterdam

as far back as 1649. They had stayed right there ever after. They had resented the British rule with the rest of the colonists. They had expressed that resentment in practical plans for a new government. They had fought in the Revolution to make that government possible. When all of that was done, they went right on living in New York City, good business men, and stalwart citizens under the Constitution.

On the other hand, Theodore Roosevelt's mother was Martha Bullock, whose ancestors had come from Scotland to settle in Georgia. Just as the Roosevelts had lived on in the North, the Bullocks had lived down in the South, loyally supporting their people, their land, and their customs. The Theodore Roosevelt who found himself so unexpectedly the president of the United States, was therefore equally a son of both the North and the South. What is more, since he was born in 1858, his early years were the years when the strife between those two sections grew into the tragic hate and grief of civil war.

But Theodore Roosevelt senior, father of the president, and Martha Bullock, his mother, were far too fine people to allow any of that strife to mar the peace of their New York home. Because of the kindly tolerance and patient forbearance that comes from deep love, from culture, and self-control, that home was not only a place free from friction but evidently a place of happy security.

And if ever a child needed such a home it was small Teddy Roosevelt. He might so easily have been unhappy, for he was a frail little fellow, gasping through long fearful nights with asthma, playing cautious games through the day with girls, or hiding away by himself to read because he was not strong enough to take his own part among the boys of the neighborhood.



Theodore Roosevelt

Those were the years when his father used to gather him up, fearful and wheezing pitifully, to carry him tenderly back and forth until he grew easier and fell asleep. Of course, the small boy grew up adoring that tall strong father. That is one reason why when that father told him he could grow strong if he would that Theodore Junior decided he would. It was no easy goal he set out to reach. But, gradually, after days and months, he began to skate a little, swim a little, ride horseback and tramp on his father's Long Island estate. Slowly, steadily, he whipped every handicap. Slowly, steadily, he developed his strength until he could hold his own in out-of-door games. As the years passed he finally came to have a body like iron, an endurance that could meet demands few men have ever been called to meet.

In the meantime he was studying under tutors—probably because he was not yet strong enough to do anything else. He also was traveling abroad, once through Europe and again to Africa, where he had a trip up the Nile and from where he came back with such a fine collection of Egyptian birds that the Smithsonian Museum at Washington gave it a place among its exhibits.

At eighteen he was ready in body and mind for Harvard. Except for a queer tumbling forth of his words whenever he felt keenly, Theodore Roosevelt was no different from many another college boy who does creditable work and graduates after four years. He took part in all regular activities during that time, but he gave no sign of being more brilliant or of having greater powers of leadership than any of his fellows.

But in those four years, he was also spending long vacations in the Maine woods. There he tramped long rough trails, slept, ate, and lived with men whose only

measure of any man was how he could and would accept and carry his own full share of responsibility. They were backwoodsmen who knew nothing of cities or towns. But they knew courage. They knew fair, honest dealing. Thoedore Roosevelt measured up to their standards and throughout all of his life he was to be grateful he did.

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To begin with he carried that measure back to New York, where, right away, even while studying law, he began to apply it to men playing the political game. Fortunately, for his future, the group he first met also measured up fairly well. He liked them. They liked him—liked him so well that within a year after he had graduated from Harvard, they managed to nominate him as a member of the New York State legislature. They helped him put up a good fight against his opponent, William Vincent Astor, and finally landed him, victoriously, in his seat at Albany.

From that seat he began to apply his rules of measurement to public officials. According to his count he soon found certain of them falling short of what he and his Maine friends considered honest. Within six weeks, the young and new legislator, therefore, rose to his feet and moved that one of those not measuring up—an outstanding judge—should be brought to account. He lost his motion, but he did succeed in drawing attention to the fact that crookedness existed in high places.

Through that experience and through others that followed in his three years of service in the New York legislature, Theodore Roosevelt learned many things. Perhaps the most important one was that success in the game of politics depends more on how well the members of a party pull together, than in the brilliance of one or several

pulling alone. While learning and applying these principles, he became the acknowledged leader of a small group of young men who wanted what he wanted—and that was to clean up corruption in public office.

Those young men saw to it that he went as delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1884. According to his instructions he worked hard and faithfully to nominate the choice of his group. When that choice was defeated, however, and James G. Blaine was nominated, instead, Theodore Roosevelt immediately put into practice his recently learned political rule. He had not wanted Blaine. Neither had his small group wanted that leader. But the majority of the Republican party evidently did. If that were true, then as a member of the whole party, he—Theodore Roosevelt—would turn about and work for Blaine, which he did.

Then what happened? Instead of approving what he had done as a good party move, he was accused of having transferred his support to Blaine so as to be on the winning side. Nothing could have been further from Roosevelt's standard of honest dealing. The blame cut, and cut deep.

About the same time, his young wife, whom he had married only a few months after leaving Harvard, died, as his first child was born. To add to that crushing grief, his mother followed his wife only twelve hours later. But, squaring his shoulders, Theodore Roosevelt, then only twenty-eight, went straight on through the campaign as he felt his responsibility demanded he should. But when that was finished he turned his back on New York. He wanted to get away—away out under still, wide skies. So he started west and he never stopped until he reached the Bad Lands of Western Dakota. There on a ranch of

his own, riding mile upon mile over soft-colored sand dunes, living in a tiny one-room log cabin—alone—he conquered his grief and the injustice he felt had been shown him by his political associates. Gradually, also, he came to know his neighbors; to win real friends among wild-riding cowboys; and then—after a time—to become a leader in establishing law and order in that country where not much of either had existed except to be broken. For two whole years he lived the life of those people, managed his ranch, and, in between times, wrote for hours in the quiet of his own cabin.

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In 1886, at peace with himself and his world, Roosevelt returned to New York once more to enter politics—this time as a Republican candidate for mayor of New York City. He was defeated. With that defeat he decided he was through with public life. He married again—this time one of the little girls with whom he had played as a child—bought a home, Sagamore Hill, out near Oyster Bay, Long Island, and started to give all of his time to writing.

But it was impossible for him to keep out of politics. There was such a lot of corruption in public affairs that could be cleaned up—if one cared enough to do it. And Theodore Roosevelt did care. Therefore, when President Harrison, in 1889, appointed him a member of the United States Civil Service Commission, he accepted, went to Washington, and began to wage his war against the spoils system. That war, under his leadership, lasted six years and was accompanied by much loud noise both for and against Roosevelt. Dramatic, forcible, fairly gripping people to him by his strong personality, he not only set straight much that was crooked, but he made American people see

that appointment to public office through the Civil Service examination was the only appointment which could put the right man in the right place.

Did he like his job? Evidently he did, for at the end of his half dozen years in that commission, he was asked to head the New York Police Board. And accepted. With a clean sweep, he rid his new department of all lazy and inefficient men. He balanced their removal by rewarding all others who deserved reward. Once more, there was much loud approval; once more there was equally loud and widespread disapproval.

Right in the midst of all this shouting, President McKinley appointed Roosevelt assistant secretary of the navy. Roosevelt accepted—accepted just at the time the Cubans were crying out for the United States to protect them from Spain. And the United States government was coming to think it would have to answer that cry. But it could not do that without a strong navy and the United States navy was anything but strong.

To the new assistant secretary there was just one thing to do—and that was to make that navy strong. So he did it. Ships were overhauled, supplied with guns, and men were trained to make "shots that hit." The whole department was reorganized from top to bottom. The task was one which nobody could have liked any better than Theodore Roosevelt. And a task which he tackled with great vigor, pursued without stopping, and only left when war was finally declared and he was off to join his friend, Dr. Leonard Wood, in organizing the first United States cavalry.

4

THE United States army had never seen anything quite like the regiment Theodore Roosevelt brought together.

There were New York City policemen who had seen him at work cleaning up their own department. There were college athletes whom he had seen play and to whom, and their fellows, he had once said:

> "In life as in a football game, the principle to follow is: Hit the line hard; don't foul and don't shirk, but hit the line hard."

There were men whom he had known in city clubs—known only as wealthy men accustomed to taking their ease in comfortable places. There were men of the street with whom he had rubbed elbows and whom he had found measured high. And there were cowboys from the far West who loved nothing better than a good fight—the more dangerous the better.

They—those men of all classes and kinds—made up the famous Rough Riders. At first when Theodore Roosevelt was given a commission as colonel in command of those men, he refused, saying he preferred to be lieutenant colonel under his friend, Dr. Wood. Later, when Dr. Wood resigned to take command of a brigade, Roosevelt became colonel. And the regiment was off—off to the steaming hot island of Cuba to help win freedom from oppression for a weak people.

Of course Colonel Roosevelt gloried in such an adventure. Of course, his men being who and what they were gloried also. That is why Roosevelt could, and did, say to them:

> "Boys, if there is a man at home who would not be proud to change places with you, he is not worth his salt and he is not a true American."

Then came that day when San Juan Hill had to be taken. To do that, a valley had to be crossed and a hill climbed while a merciless fire from the Spanish rained down on the oncoming troops. Taking his place at the head of his

Rough Riders, Colonel Roosevelt charged across that valley, swept up that hill, and took San Juan. The capture of San Juan led to the surrender of Santiago and that surrender to the end of the war.

5

AMERICANS have always been ready and more than ready to honor men of brave deeds. And so when the Rough Riders returned to America they found themselves famous. Colonel Roosevelt, with the laurels of war added to those he had won in civil life, not only found himself famous, but also found himself elected governor of the state of New York. That meant that he—being Theodore Roosevelt—had another stiff fight to wage.

He began to wage it at once. For years, ever since the time of Martin Van Buren and even before that, New York had been largely controlled by men of great wealth, by large, powerful business concerns, and by the spoils system. Theodore Roosevelt liked nothing better than to get his chance to turn that whole situation upside down, to air it thoroughly, and to bring about equal justice to all the people of his state.

Naturally, the rank and the file of his state liked what he did. Just as naturally the boss rule and the politicians who paid homage to that rule did not like it. So when Theodore Roosevelt was nominated for vice-president in 1900 and was thus removed from the head of New York's government, nothing could have pleased those leaders better. Perhaps—who knows—they may even have done much to see that he was nominated; for the vice-presidency did not offer any chance for a man to wield a big stick.

On the other hand nothing could have displeased Governor Roosevelt more. He wanted a second term as

chief executive of his own state. He needed it to finish what he had begun. He protested vigorously. But the campaign went right along with William McKinley running for a second term as president and Theodore Roosevelt running in second place. Of course they were elected. Then in September following their inauguration, came the assassination of President McKinley.

And, suddenly, Theodore Roosevelt found himself president of the United States. Only forty-three, he was the youngest man up to that time to take the inaugural oath. Did his youth bother him? Not at all. What did years count to a man like him who could and did crowd every second of his day full of real living? What did anything count against the fact that work lay ahead to be done—work worthy of his blood, his training, his experience as a stalwart American citizen?

Evidently he concluded that if he were to be president at all, he would be so up to the full limit permitted by the Constitution he meant to preserve. Anyone following what he had done in public service before his presidency would know, pretty generally, how he would use that power. Civil Service Reform was pushed actively and continuously. Many large, wealthy corporations came under government control. Waste in the country's natural resources was checked and conservation established in its place. Of course he met opposition. Of course he was accused of all sorts of inexcusable interference, and of stopping the progress of big business. But he went right on working; right on keeping faith with all classes of people.

> "The White House door, while I am here [he said] shall swing open as easily for the laboring man as for the capitalist, and no easier."

and so it swung, equally open to both—but just as he promised, not any more freely to one than to the other. Watching that door made the American people learn much about justice.

They learned many other things quite as well, for all through the years he was accomplishing those ends, Theodore Roosevelt was busily occupied with very significant foreign affairs.

Trouble arose in China, involving the representation there from European nations, Japan, and the United States. American troops were sent over to fight with the armies of those countries in protecting the rights of all. Those troops did their own proud share of the fighting. President Roosevelt also interfered to bring peace between Russia and Japan, at war with each other in 1905. Insisting that it was not only to the interest of those two nations to make peace but to all "civilized mankind" as well, he kept up a series of conferences with the two countries until a treaty of peace was signed in the fall of that year. With that success to give him heart, he continued to argue against all war, and finally brought about the Second International Peace Congress at The Hague in 1907.

Never had the United States found itself so closely allied with overseas nations before. Never had it left its proud western position to fight or to mingle with foreign nations for a common world good. Once having done so, however, the door had swung wide. So wide, in fact, it never could or would quite close again. Theodore Roosevelt had had the vision and had used the power to open that door.

At the same time, back on his own continent, he had reached up to Alaska to settle with Great Britain the rights to seal fisheries and mining of gold and a long-disputed

boundary question. He also reached down to Panama to protect that newly established republic and to receive—in return for a fair financial sum—the land and the right to begin the construction of the Panama Canal.

And while all of these new ventures were being carried on, down in Cuba, over in Hawaii and the Philippine Islands, the protecting arm of the United States government was gradually bringing peace and progress to the people in all of those remote lands. Such a policy was but natural to Theodore Roosevelt whose family for century upon century had kept as their motto:

"He who has planted will care for."

While all of this world-sweeping activity was going on, Theodore Roosevelt's first term had come to an end in 1904, and he had been sent back for another four years by 343 electoral votes over 133 given his opponent. According to his own often-expressed wish he was not even made a candidate at the end of that term. No doubt he felt he had given enough.

Free, therefore, to do what he most wanted to do, he was off for Africa two weeks after he left the White House. All of his life long he had longed to hunt big game, to collect specimens of plants, to live for weeks in a tropical jungle. And he took those weeks—forty of them! When he came out he found the whole world just waiting to give him a welcome. He traveled through Egypt, Europe, and England and received the highest of honors everywhere. On his return home he was met with an enthusiasm that must have stirred his heart to its depths.

That enthusiasm had to have something around which to center. What should it be? What greater honor could they give this world-famous man than a third term as president

of the United States? Political leaders seized upon the opportunity just as they had upon General Grant's return years before. Because many of his dearly prized plans as president had not carried through as he had hoped they would, Roosevelt permitted his name to be used. But—also like Grant—he was defeated for nomination.

Because he was a good fighter, Theodore Roosevelt could take defeat without letting it cripple him. He had served long and certainly had served with great honor. He could now go home to Sagamore Hill to rest and to go on with his writing. For somehow—no man can say how—he had found time to write throughout all of his hard working public life. There was his *Winning of the West* turned out in his most vigorous years. There were his *Letters to His Children*—full of a wonderful tenderness but also full of respect for the dignity due a child. And, of course, there were papers—hundreds of them—setting forth his ideas of government.

This work, together with a trip to South America, filled his days full. Then the World War came. He offered to organize a regiment and lead it himself straight into No Man's Land. The United States Government could not accept the offer. It did accept, however, the service of his four sons. So while he remained at home speaking, writing, raising funds to support the war, he saw those sons sail, and later, heard of Quentin's death on the battlefield. He only set his jaw harder and plunged deeper into the work of helping to win what America had started to win.

In the midst of all that, he had to go under a surgeon's care. He never recovered his old strength again. A year later he went to sleep one January night, 1919, and never wakened. Today he rests on a low quiet hill not far from where his own home looks out over Long Island Sound.

III. WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

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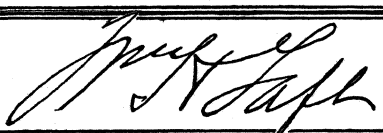
It was Independence Day, 1901. What did that mean to the half-fearful, half-resentful Filipinos just waiting to hear what the United States, their new government, had planned to do with them? What did it mean to William Howard Taft just arrived among them to carry out that government's plans? Was he thinking of another Independence Day in 1776 when a group of his own countrymen had dared declare the right of every human being to live, to be free, to be happy? Why else had he chosen that day to reassure the small brown people before him? Was that why he spoke so simply, so directly to them when he said:

> "My Fellow Countrymen, I am your friend. I have come to bring justice and freedom to you on behalf of a great nation. Trust me, help me, and you will find I am a man of my word."

Did that island people come to trust him? Did he prove worthy of that trust? Did he make them glad or sorry that the United States—not Spain—owned them? Who was this man, William Taft, that he could speak so exactly the right words to a people far removed from him in race, in country, in ways of thinking?

For no people and leader could have been farther apart in their past lives than this representative of the United States government and the people of the Philippine Islands. To begin with, William Taft came from inland America—from Middle West Ohio, a land as far removed from all foreign contacts as any land in the United States could be. To be sure, his father, a lawyer and a good one, had gone forth from Cincinnati where William was born in 1857,


Samuel Bemont Schieffelin



to serve as secretary of war and attorney general under President Grant. Later, President Arthur had sent that father as minister to Austria and Russia. Any son growing up in the home of Alphonso Taft would, therefore, hear much of national affairs and of old European court and diplomatic life.

The fact that the Taft family always considered any government appointment a matter of high trust did, however, have much to do with the standards of public service set up by a son of that family. Added to that, William himself, meant to be a lawyer. What is more he meant to be a good enough one to do honor to his father's profession. As the years passed, he began to wish he might some day win a high place for himself as a lawyer. Of course, the dream above all dreams for any such boy was to sit—some far-off day—on the bench of the United States Supreme Court. Could he ever hope to see that dream come true?

That had to be left for the future to tell. In the meantime, the boy went to the public schools of Cincinnati, Ohio, played good football, baseball, gave the other boys of his age a stiff bout in wrestling and boxing—and graduated at seventeen. Then he went to Yale to follow much the same sort of life and to graduate, in 1878, standing second in scholarship in his class. Two years later he had completed his law course at the University of Cincinnati and tied with one of his classmates for the first prize in scholarship.

2

WILLIAM TAFT was then twenty-three. With his huge body radiant with health and the joy of just being alive, he was ready, if ever a young man was, to be off toward his own particular goal. Instead of setting up his own law office,

however, he started toward that goal by reporting the daily proceedings of Cincinnati's courts to the city papers. In that way he saw law from both angles—that of the man who broke it and that of the judge and his associate whose business it was to deal out justice to the lawbreaker. Generous and human as he was, he certainly learned much of the meaning of real justice from those days. And he must also have reported what he learned in a clean-cut way that impressed the citizens of Hamilton County with his legal ability; for the next year they made him assistant prosecuting attorney.

Before he had well begun the work of that office, he was sent to Washington on a mission for his father. While there he was unexpectedly made internal revenue collector. Although taking that position meant a delay in his professional progress, it evidently offered enough in other ways to decide William Taft to accept it. That meant plunging deep into an entirely new field of work; meant conquering a bewildering amount of details. William Taft could and did make himself do all of that. But, although he handled the position satisfactorily, he could not make himself contented in it. He did not belong in a customs office. He belonged in law. And within a few months he resigned —said goodbye to his $10,000-a-year salary and to Washington life to go back to Cincinnati.

Without wasting any more time, he immediately started to practice law with one of his father's former partners. Now, as it happened, the Cincinnati courts had long been in need of investigation. Everybody suspected corrupt dealings in them. Somebody must do something. William Taft, twenty-six, well trained in law, just fresh from his experience as court reporter, eager to clean up anything affecting justice, very sound, very alive in body and mind,

decided he would be that somebody. Whereupon he waded straight into the depths of the whole situation, turned the full blaze of publicity on it, and then—cleaned it up.

That was a good fight and well won. So well won, in fact, that he was rewarded with the office of assistant county solicitor. With the work of that position and his own private practice, his fame spread so that by the time he was thirty, he was appointed judge of Cincinnati's superior court. William Taft was now well on his own way.

Three years later he reached another signpost when President Harrison made him solicitor-general of the United States. After that he moved on to the place of United States judge for the Sixth Circuit. While going ahead with this last work, he was made professor and dean of the law department of the University of Cincinnati. Altogether he seemed to be firmly entrenched in the work he most wanted to do.

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THEN, right in the midst of those very active, very satisfying days, President McKinley thought of William Taft in connection with the Philippine Islands. Certainly those islands, just ceded by the old Spanish monarchy to the republic of the United States, needed strong, wise leadership if ever any land needed it. Bewildered by the sudden appearance of Admiral Dewey in Manila Bay, bewildered still more by seeing the Spanish flag hauled down and the Stars and Stripes hoisted in its place, the citizens of those islands were in a tragic state of disorder, disease, and rebellion.

Considering all of that—and then considering William Taft, President McKinley decided he had found the man to handle the new possessions with understanding and

justice. William Taft was therefore made commander-in-chief of a military commission to sail to the Philippine Islands and there to transform a sullen, resentful, fighting, people into a people of willing allegiance to the United States.

If that fighting had been the only trouble the new commission had had to face it might have been handled quickly and for all time. But when the Commander-in-Chief looked over his nation's new possessions, he saw back of the few leaders of that rebellion, thousands of helpless men and women, many of whom were savages, very few of whom could speak or understand English, all of whom were hungry, frightened and disease-ridden. What he did not see—anywhere on the whole length and breadth of those islands—was a single free school; a single court where justice was sure to be met; or any signs anywhere of a governing body that really knew how to govern. His splendid mind swept the whole situation at a glance. His whole great heart went out to those helpless people. Something besides discipline was needed. Because that was true, because those islanders needed a friend, William Taft became that friend. And he told them so that Fourth of July, 1901.

Then he started to prove his friendship. Six hundred thousand little Filipinos were furnished with schools where they could learn English. Good roads were built through the islands. The water supply was purified and sewers were laid so that disease, so common everywhere, began to lessen. The people were taught that to save was one road to security. So they saved—saved to deposit their small earnings in the postal saving banks set up for them everywhere. To protect those savings—to protect both property and people—courts of real justice were also set up. And in

order to make all of this permanently safe, Commander-in-Chief Taft began at once, and continued, to train native men of the new possessions in matters of modern government.

With all of those things to think about and to set going, William Taft found time, also, to travel to Rome to confer with the Pope over the lands owned by the Catholic Church in the Philippine Islands. For years the natives of the islands and the priests of the various parishes had been quarreling over those lands. Now, Judge Taft represented the cause of his brown people so well—to both the Pope and the United States government—that the Catholic Church agreed to sell those lands to the United States; whereupon Congress voted $7,239,000 to buy them.

In doing all this for the people he had been sent out to help, William Taft had come to like them for themselves and to look upon many of them as men and women worthy of the friendship of any American man. When, therefore, he returned home and found his countrymen still blaming the Filipinos for many things over which the islanders had not yet gained control, he insisted that a group of thinking Americans go over to the islands with him to see for themselves that what he claimed for his friends there was true. They went. What they found proved to them just what Judge Taft hoped it would prove—that the brown men of those islands were really playing more fair than many of the representatives of the United States Government stationed there.

4

Of course, Theodore Roosevelt liked what William Taft did for the land he had fought to win. How could he help but do so when he and his family—like the Washington

family—always had assumed responsibility for new possessions as fast as they won them? It was but natural, then, that when Colonel Roosevelt became president, he should include William Taft in his cabinet as secretary of war. Which meant that Secretary Taft had to go down to Cuba to take control of affairs there when the Cuban government fell; that he had to go on to Panama to straighten out a tangle connected with the construction of the new canal; that he had even to travel to far-off Japan to calm the Japanese who had become alarmed for the safety of their people living along the Pacific coast of America.

He did all of these things so very wisely that President Roosevelt once more took a long look at him and then concluded he was the safest man he knew to entrust with all of the many plans he had put under way in his administration. The American people also trusted William Taft. He had gone on his own way quietly—never claiming credit for what he had done, never, for a second, boasting of what he could do, but with sensible, sympathetic friendliness working wherever he happened to be for people to have a fair, honest chance in life. He had earned, if ever any man had, the high honor the United States—through the Republican party—now proceeded to give him. Did he, himself—when he found himself president—look off a bit wistfully toward the bench of the Supreme Court—the goal he had set himself as the one in all the world he would rather reach? Even if he did, he was a sufficiently good American to be deeply gratified over being made the chief executive of his country. He could have had no doubt of that country's affection for him for he received a tremendous popular vote and two-thirds of those cast by the electors. But while the people joined to assure William Taft they wanted him for president, those people split in country and

state elections. As a result, when he took his seat, he faced a lowered majority in his Republican support in Congress as well as a division within that majority because of the new Progressive element that had arisen in the ranks of the Republican party. Altogether the future did not promise smooth sailing for President Taft when he took up his new duties, March 4, 1909.

Since he had promised in his campaign to act quickly for the revision of tariff, he kept his promise by immediately calling a special session of Congress. The house and the Senate began, however, to wrangle over the Payne-Aldrich Tariff Bill presented for revision. So, what with amendments and settlement of various details, it was made so unsatisfactory to the President, that he had to intervene and actually compel a reduction of certain duties before he would sign it. In the end, he saw the scale lowered for import duties; he saw his Philippine friends helped by a free exchange with the United States; he saw a maximum and minimum tariff established which would help the American Government defend itself against foreign governments discriminating against it in trade.

That was not all that he or the people hoped to get done on the tariff question. But those things did bring about some improvement and gave President Taft time to set up his commission to study the whole trade situation at home and abroad. If that could be done the world would then have a basis on which to build up a fairer proportion of duties paid and received. He did get that commission appointed, but owing to the friction between political leaders in Congress, the good it might have accomplished never was.

But while this matter of income from tariff interested him vitally, President Taft was even more interested in

how that income should be spent. He, therefore, went deeply into the matter of a comprehensive government budget. He studied, he recommended, he urged the annual adoption of such a budget for the United States. While he was not to see anything of consequence done on the matter by the Congress of his time, many of the improvements which were made in later years were due to the work of his administration.

Although neither the tariff nor this budget question got as far as he hoped either might, he was able to accomplish much in connection with the enforcement of the Sherman Antitrust Law. Several of the most powerful trusts in the country were dissolved. The President's legal training stood him in good stead in connection with the prosecution of law suits—by government lawyers—against other large corporations. That training and his sense of fair dealing also helped him to push the regulation of railroads through the Interstate Commerce Commission.

A number of other recommendations were made by him for such things as the establishment of a postal savings-bank system; amendments to the Employers' Liability Act; further protection of national resources; the setting up of a National Health Bureau; and certain adjustments concerning the issuing of injunctions by federal courts.

His whole foreign policy was one of arbitration and diplomacy. He, himself, worked on the drawing up of certain treaties to be submitted to Canada, Great Britain, and France. In the main those treaties, as he completed them, were satisfactory to the foreign nations concerned. But by the time the American Congress finished putting in clauses and striking out others, no one of those foreign governments would accept the result. William Taft, however, was to live to see what he himself had prepared

used as a basis for negotiations that did go through. He was also to live to hear that his policies for settling world problems reached the most progressive and far-seeing point ever reached by any American man up to his time.

But while he had the ability to deal tactfully with those far-reaching issues, he either did not have the same ability or—perhaps—the patience to use that ability in handling his party's office seekers or officeholders. Just because a man had worked to win success in a Republican election was no sign to William Taft that that man was fit to head some department in the Federal government. If that man were fit, well and good; if not, he hadn't a ghost of a chance with President Taft. What was true of those seeking office was equally true of those already holding office. Out went those who could not or did not give the best to that office. In came the man who could and would serve ably and fully.

Quite naturally this attitude towards them and their friends did not increase his popularity with Republican leaders. When his activities along this line swept out some of Theodore Roosevelt's appointees, even their friendship grew cool. This friction within his own party, together with the fact that, while his work was to count high in the future, the close of his four years as president showed very little actually completed—prevented his having much of a chance for a second term. That chance grew even less when Theodore Roosevelt returned home from his African hunt loaded with foreign honors and surrounded with the glamour of all his past achievements. The Republican party split at the nominating convention over these two leaders and the issues for which they stood. President Taft, in the end, won the nomination, but because of that split, the Republican party lost the election and the Democrats won by electing Woodrow Wilson.

BUT although William Taft was a good Republican, he was an even better American citizen. Therefore, when the World War first began, he stood with President Wilson in opposing America's entrance into that war. Later, when the president had to yield to pressure at home and abroad and issue his call for American men to go overseas to the aid of the allies, ex-president Taft stood behind him like a stone wall. Even after the World War was won, he still stood by him and worked with him to bring about a promise of world peace through the League of Nations.

In the meantime, after leaving the White House, William Taft had gone back to his beloved law. He accepted a professorship at Yale; he was elected president of the American Bar Association; he served on many boards and committees where his legal advice was needed. And then—when he was in the full swing of his old profession and feeling securely at home again in his own work—President Harding chose him to be chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. William Taft's lifelong dream had, at last, come true. He had reached the one goal he, himself, had hoped he might some day reach.

So it was that this man of the Middle West, this friend of all classes of people, this leader of high American standards —walked out into the full expression of his own self. Wise, kindly, fair, dignified, he made a chief justice in whom the whole United States took great satisfaction. With his warm heart, with his irrepressible chuckle, he had long since made himself a friend of those people. Therefore, when he became very ill in the spring of 1930, Americans everywhere watched anxiously, sorrowfully, all through the weeks before his death finally came to grip them in a grief such as few great men have ever had shown them.

Chapter XI

AND THOSE NOT SO WEAK

I. WOODROW WILSON

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THE world had never seemed more at peace with itself than it did that March 4, 1913. Certainly the United States never stretched out in more contented security than then. There it lay on its own Western continent safeguarded to the east and the west by great oceans, and still further shut off by its own born-in-the-blood doctrine of strictly tending to its own affairs and letting the rest of the world tend to its own.

Did Woodrow Wilson think particularly of that security as he raised his hand to swear his inaugural oath? Or did he take it just as a matter of course? Out beyond the crowd massed below him, out beyond the capital city, one proud state after another reached on and on, states with fair prosperous cities and richly productive farms, states where his people should be living in calm content if ever a people did. Did the new President's mind leap back to that first inaugural day—that long-ago day in 1789—to give a thought to the straggling line of thirteen thinly peopled states clinging close to the Atlantic coast as if they never could or would let go long enough to turn toward the great West? If he did give a thought to that day, did he wonder whether the states of his day ever could, ever would let go of their own present safety long enough to look up and out to the world beyond? And to risk some-

thing of that safety for the sake of becoming world citizens?

If ever a president thought of such possibilities, Woodrow Wilson ought to have done so. Back of him lay his own long years of studying the progress of other nations. Beyond that lay centuries of ancestry made up chiefly of scholars and ministers—men and women with a stern practical sense of duty towards home and country but also men and women who dreamed fair dreams and set up far-shining goals. How could they do anything else when that ancestry was both Scotch and Irish? If the Scotch blood made Woodrow Wilson somewhat unyielding, somewhat grim in playing his game alone, the Irish side of him just as surely gave him his love and understanding of little children, his keen love of good fun, and the charm which brought him friends and made him a rare companion.

His people had not been removed long enough from Scotland and Ireland for President Wilson to have lost much of their native qualities. His own grandfather Wilson, a good, stout, Irish Presbyterian, had come to America in 1807 to settle first in Philadelphia, and then to join the thousands of others traveling out to new western lands. That is why Woodrow Wilson's own father was born in Ohio and lived there to grow up and become a Presbyterian minister—and to marry Janet Woodrow, the daughter of an equally stout Scotch Presbyterian—another minister, in fact. Surely a stern background for any American man to look back upon and with which to keep faith.

With all that sternness there must have been also a rare amount of tenderness and understanding, for throughout not only his early years, but throughout many of those heavy with responsibility, Woodrow Wilson turned again



Woodrow Wilson

and again to his father, sure of sympathetic but very sound, safe, guidance. As for his mother, he, himself, wrote:

> "She was one of the most remarkable persons I have ever known. She was so reserved that only a few of her own household can have known how lovable she was, though every friend knew how steadfast and loyal she was. I thank God to have had such a mother."

The family had left Ohio and were living in Staunton, Virginia, when Woodrow Wilson was born in the Presbyterian manse, December 28, 1856. He was christened Thomas Woodrow Wilson. That is why he was called Tommie all through his early years. Since his father accepted a call two years later to Augusta, Georgia, many of those years were spent in the far South when that whole section was marching off to battle and home again.

Probably small Tommie Wilson had no idea what all the cheering and waving of flags meant in '61. But he was nine in '65 when the war ended. How much did he see of the grief, of the terrible hurt of proud men and women bowed by defeat? How much did he realize of all that as he peered out from the safe shelter of his own father's manse? Did what he saw and realize then rise up to face him years later when he, himself, had to decide whether his own loved land should take its share of responsibility in the World War?

If those days did cause him to halt as a man, they certainly did not cast much of a shadow on his life as a boy. For some reason, he was allowed to do pretty much as he liked about studying until he was about nine. But, even so, he did very well. For one thing, he loved good stories and would listen

intently for hours while his sisters read aloud from Dickens and Scott. Besides what he stowed away from those hours, there were the other tales he chose for himself when he learned to read—not peacable ones, but ones of brave naval fights and of blood-thirsty pirates with moldy old chests of stolen treasures. He not only read those stories, but he soon began to spin tales of his own—tales of fierce, reckless deeds, in which he always saw himself fighting as a brave leader.

Since he was a very normal, very live boy, he also played long hours with the other town boys. He pitched, batted, made bases, quarreled and cheered long and loud with the neighborhood gang. He rode horseback along lovely southern roads. He debated with fiery heat in the Lightfoot Club. In short, he had a good time.

But not all of this happened in Augusta, Georgia. Like most preachers of fair ability but moderate income, Joseph Wilson never could count on calling any one town home very long at a time. After Augusta, the Wilson family moved on to Columbia, South Carolina. From there, when he was seventeen, Tommie Wilson was sent to Davidson College, in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. That was a good old Presbyterian school, worthy of the Wilson family. There the son of that family cut wood for his own fire, swept and scrubbed his own room, and carried water from the school pump for his bath. In that school, no boy had any standing at all unless he did all of those things, while also making a good record in his studies and being a good fellow in all college sports as well. Woodrow Wilson managed to keep his work up creditably, managed to make friends who stayed friends all of his life, and in addition, debated, wrote, and walked many miles while he thought out his own thoughts alone.

But, in doing all of that, his health broke. He was forced to quit school for a time. His disappointment, however, was no doubt softened considerably by the fact that he was then free to go home and study under his father. By that time the family fortunes had led them on to live in Wilmington, North Carolina. There, between periods of study, young Tommie wandered for hours along the wharves, watching boats go in and out, hearing wonderful yarns from the sailors, and growing daily more sure that their life was the only life for him. But when he told his father what he had decided, his dreams and plans were blown skyward. A son of the Wilson-Woodrow families sail the seas for a living? How could he? No, his father had long ago made other plans.

Those plans meant going to Princeton University for four straight years; meant that Tommie Wilson became Woodrow Wilson from the day he registered there; meant standing fairly well in his classes; meant leading in all debating and literary clubs; meant being student director of athletic sport. During all of those years, Woodrow Wilson was also gradually feeling his way towards the work he was later to find just suited to his ability. The one outstanding result of this rather groping, rather uncertain attempt to get on his feet was expressed in an article in the *International Review* which he prepared in his senior year. In that article, he attacked the procedure of the United States Congress and for the first time set forth some of the political principles which were later to give him a foundation from which to work.

He graduated in 1879. He then studied law for two years at the University of Virginia and was admitted to the bar. He even began or tried to begin a practice back in his boyhood home at Augusta, Georgia. But there was the

waste of time and money in long trials to outrage his Scotch thriftiness; there was the uncertainty of justice at the end of those trials to arouse his Irish sense of gallant, fair play. He did not like any of it. So he gave it all up and entered Johns Hopkins University to get his doctor's degree in government and history. And to give proof that he had found what he could do best by writing clearly and delightfully his thesis on *Congressional Government.*

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WOODROW WILSON was twenty-nine when he completed that thesis. He had taken plenty of time to get ready for life. But when he was once ready he traveled with fair swiftness to a far goal. Did he have any glimpse of that goal? One wonders. If he did, he gave no sign. Instead he began teaching at Bryn Mawr College, went on to Wesleyan University, and then finally, back to his own old university of Princeton. It had taken him five years to cover that ground. All of those years had been spent on his chosen subjects of history and political economy. At Princeton he began as professor of jurisprudence and became known very quickly as a brilliant speaker and writer who could make history and political economy humanly interesting. In 1902, he was elected president of Princeton and at once set about trying to make university life more democratic and to establish higher standards in both the educational and social lives of students.

By the time he had had twenty-five years of this experience in teaching, lecturing, and writing on how governments should be run if people were to be happy and prosperous, Woodrow Wilson was a man very well known for his sound judgment on matters of state. Where some politicians had come to much the same place through filling

public office in town, county, and state, he had sat in the halls of Princeton looking back over long centuries of good rule and bad rule in countries the world over. He had discovered that if people were bound down too closely by either kings or political parties, those people most certainly would, in time, arise and overthrow their rulers. On the other hand, he had also seen people live on contentedly hundreds of years just because they were allowed to have a share in saying what should be done by their government for their own homes, their own lands, their own chance to live as they wanted to live. In short, he had found that when all was said and done the people of a land made the power of that land.

And New Jersey listening to the president of Princeton University deliver his brilliant opinions decided to give him his chance to prove the practical value of those opinions. So they offered him the nomination for governor of the state. He took it and walked forth from Princeton straight into the hot give-and-take of a political campaign. Instead of the quiet deference of a classroom, instead of the respectful listening of a lecture hall, he met the heckling of political opponents, the man-to-man matching of wits with shrewd, seasoned state leaders. Evidently Woodrow Wilson was more than equal to all that he met; for he won the election. Evidently, also, he liked the experience for he never went back to his old quiet life again.

Once governor of New Jersey, he took hold of that State's affairs in a manner that left no doubt in anybody's mind that he knew what he wanted to do and meant to do it. To begin with he seized upon the reform of corrupt political practices already begun in the state and pushed that reform vigorously. He saw that working men were protected by a liability act. He safeguarded public utilities by a commission.

He insisted on a clean-up in city governments. And he dealt a blow at trusts through what is known as the Seven Sisters—a series of bills striking clean-cut in defense of the public against powerful corporations.

Successful in all of these attempts, Woodrow Wilson turned his ear from New Jersey towards the American nation. What did he hear? Nothing more or less than he had heard in New Jersey. And what he had heard in New Jersey was exactly what he had heard in listening down through the ages to all people and all lands—which was exactly what Washington, Jefferson, the Adamses and all the rest had heard when they decided to base the Constitution of the United States Government on the rights of people to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

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THEREFORE, when the National Democratic Party decided to nominate him for president in 1912, Woodrow Wilson saw no reason why he should not permit his name to be used, which meant that he stepped out into the national limelight just at the time Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive, was upsetting plans to reelect William Howard Taft, regular Republican. That was a distinguished three to hold the attention of the American people—the Rough Rider with his magnificent big stick, the genial judge, and the university professor. The first, as everybody knows, dropped out in the nominating hall. That left the judge and the professor to begin the campaign. They fought it through like the two upstanding leaders they were and the United States cheered as they fought. In the end the Princeton University man won.

Won—to stand looking out from the Capitol steps over a land so busy building up peaceful prosperity that it scarcely

stopped long enough to take stock of the new sort of man taking his oath as their chief executive. But within the next month they were stopping—stopping to lift their heads in surprise to see that very properly dressed, very properly mannered executive stride out from the White House to the Capitol to read his own message to the special session of Congress he had assembled. What they saw that day they were to see through all the rest of the days that Woodrow Wilson stood at the head of the government. There was to be no more doubt about his being president than there had been about his being governor. Whenever he wanted a thing well done—he did it himself.

To start with, he, like all other democratic presidents before him, began to reduce the high tariff favored by the previous Republican administrations. Fortunately for the fame of his leadership this attempt succeeded when the Underwood Tariff Bill was passed in October of his first year. The fact that this bill met real opposition from both working men and powerful business concerns spoke all the more loudly for President Wilson's ability to put through his recommendations.

In December of the same year, he again was successful in having the House and Senate pass the Federal Reserve Bill which by making funds available when unusual needs arose, and by a currency that grew less or greater to meet necessity, reduced the danger of financial panic. A little later, he saw the Federal Trade Commission and the Clayton Antitrust Act ready for enforcement. Through those laws he hoped to aid laboring men and women.

When it came to his foreign policies, President Wilson insisted that the United States government could afford to be generous. To that end he worked to get the Philippine Islands ready to govern themselves. He saw the protection

of Haiti established, and a military government set up in Santo Domingo. To pacify Japan he tried to get California to reduce its legislation against Japanese immigration. To help straighten out a tangle in Nicaraguan trade, United States officials were ordered to take over the handling of customs there. To adjust complaints down in the Panama Canal region, he recommended the repeal of the law freeing American coast trade from toll along the Canal. But when he went so far in his generosity as to urge Congress to apologize to Colombia, and to pay that government $25,000,000 for the seizure of Panama—Congress objected.

While he was succeeding in getting all of those foreign relations on a more friendly basis, Mexico was giving the Wilson administration plenty of cause for anxiety. War—civil war—was devastating that whole country from border to border. Many citizens of the United States felt that the Federal government should interfere. On the other hand, wealthy business corporations with large interests in Mexico bitterly opposed any such interference. Between the two opposing demands, President Wilson set up his policy of "watchful waiting"; and maintained it until the Mexicans attacked the United States navy and crossed the border in a raid on American territory. Then he ordered the navy to seize Vera Cruz and sent troops down to patrol and defend the border. Even in the face of these military proceedings, an American-Mexican commission met, conferred, and managed to set up a sufficient show of peace to warrant the withdrawal of American troops from the border.

During the months this Mexican trouble had been wearing away American patience, the World War was raging in Europe and threatening to involve the United States in spite of her policy of "Hands off." Of course, Woodrow

Wilson, with his hatred of war, stood like a rock to maintain that policy. German submarines threatened American life and trade and he wrote notes of protest in answer. The *Lusitania* was sunk to send terror, grief, and desperate rage sweeping over the land and still the President worked on trying to guide the United States past the calamity threatening to destroy all of Central Europe.

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In the midst of all this shouting for, and shouting against war, President Wilson's first administration drew to a close. Evidently there were more who hoped for peace than wanted war, for in 1916, he was reelected president on the campaign slogan that "He has kept us out of war."

Once more he found himself looking forth from the Capitol steps as he swore to protect and defend the Constitution to his "best ability." Did he contrast the peace of March 4, 1913 with the bitter unrest and dread of March 4, 1917? Did he look ahead wondering whether he could possibly keep his campaign pledge? He started to do so most valiantly. But when the German Ambassador handed him a note containing the statement that the German government was about to resume her savage submarine warfare—what could he do except order Congress to make a declaration of war?

That declaration rang around the world. Once it was made, no matter how hard they tried, no matter how loud they protested, Americans could never again quite return to their old-time secure aloofness. But once the decision was made those same Americans marched out to take their own magnificent part in the war. Fortunately, President Wilson realized that while he might know much about statesmanship, he knew nothing whatever about how to

conduct a war. He, therefore, was wise enough to agree to the organization of a military staff to decide all military questions. That staff wanted General John J. Pershing appointed commander-in-chief of the American army in France. President Wilson made that appointment—made it to the never-ending glory and honor of the whole American army.

Since this war, although barbarous in its fierce devastation of life and property, was still a modern war, the President of the United States worked just as swiftly to keep under control the want, the sickness, the destructive forces attending it as he did to win it. He brought together experts in handling problems of food, fuel, shelter, and disease. Politics were never allowed to enter into his choice of those experts. Democrat, Republican, Progressive—each was given a chance to use his "best ability" along with the president.

Even so, even while meeting the demands of war, Woodrow Wilson never for a single hour stopped hoping—and praying—for peace, peace not for America alone, but a peace so broad and so everlasting that the whole world might swing out into its sunlight. But because the blood of the stern, practical Scotch ran in his veins quite as strongly as the blood of the dream-loving Irish, he worked every second that he hoped and prayed. The result of that work was first announced through his famous fourteen points in January, 1918. Later, when the longed-for end came to fighting, those points were placed on that never-to-be-forgotten table at Versailles as a basis on which to build a world peace.

And when that time came, Woodrow Wilson was sitting right there to see that what he had laid down should be followed. To be sure all America had gasped when he sailed

for France. No American president had ever before crossed either ocean while in office. But what had that to do with the affairs in hand? For that matter, no American president had ever before sent an army overseas to fight for the rights of far-distant neighbors. Surely if that army had helped win the victory, the president could and should be present at Versailles to make that victory count; not for a year, not for a century—but forever—if that could be done.

Even if America had looked askance at his going, France certainly received Woodrow Wilson with enough wild cheering to warm his heart. But, something more than cheering awaited the American President at Versailles. For two long months the representatives gathered there tore those fourteen points to tatters, put them together again, wore themselves out with arguments and the world with waiting.

There were days in those two months when men held their breath for fear the whole dream would go on the rocks. The allies insisted that Germany and Austria-Hungary pay for all wrongs done. Others insisted that stronger nations should protect and assist the weaker nations. Greedy nations demanded more than their share. But Woodrow Wilson's fourteen points finally won. And with the winning, the League of Nations also came into being, for the same fourteen points went into the Covenant of that League that went into the treaty of peace.

Having done their work, the representatives at Versailles hurried off to get the approval of their various governments. But when Woodrow Wilson reached home did he, the man who had, in truth, brought forth the whole golden fabric of the League—did he find approval? From some—yes. But from many he met indifference, from others bitter

blame, and from political leaders—a stiffly unyielding, organized opposition. Fighting, however, every inch of the way, he finally managed, by permitting certain changes, to get the Covenant accepted. He then returned to Paris to submit those changes to the conference there. But in turn for that conference's approval of the American changes, he had to concede certain things to European leaders.

Again he came home. Again he met opposition. By that time there was a strong Republican majority in Congress which balked him at every turn. No doubt if he had used more tact, if he had been willing to yield some points, he might have won others. But there was his Scotch-Irish blood again. There were the long, long years of building up his vision of what made for peace and good government. There was his fierce struggle against entering the World War. There was his word that if America did enter it was to win a war to end all war. He believed that nothing short of the Covenant of the League of Nations would make that word safe.

So, with his never-failing faith in the American people, he determined to go straight out into their midst and talk the whole matter over with them. That was in the summer of 1919. He was very tired. He was heart sick. Perhaps he was also very much humiliated to have his own people refuse to support what most of the rest of the world had accepted. Perhaps all of those things weighed him down. At any rate, the undertaking proved too much for him. While in the West his health broke completely. He was forced to give up and return to Washington.

There he gathered himself together for one more supreme effort. If he could only have gained a Democratic majority in the following election—who knows what he still might have done? But, instead, the American people spoke through

an overwhelming Republican victory. All of his life, Woodrow Wilson had believed one should heed when those people spoke. After that election, no one ever heard him talk again—publicly—of the League of Nations.

At the close of his second administration he retired to his own home in Washington. There he lived until 1924, broken, disappointed, apart from the world. Did he ever look up and out toward distant Geneva to take heart over what he saw being done there? Did he ever think that, perhaps, his own American people had gone much farther than even they knew because he had dreamed his dream of world peace?

Chapter XII

AT THE WORLD'S CROSS ROADS

I. WARREN G. HARDING

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ALL of his life Warren Gamaliel Harding had worked with a group. It was only natural, then, that when he faced the American people that March 4, 1921, he should say:

> "If I felt that there is to be sole responsibility in the executive for the America of tomorrow I should shrink from the burden. But [he went on] there are a hundred millions with common concern and shared responsibility answerable to God and country. The Republic summons them to their duty."

Any American should have liked that challenge. By it they were certainly recognized as free and equal in all that tended to advance their own welfare. There was to be, apparently, no standing apart from them by this new president; no striking out alone by him on new untrodden paths. To a people sent reeling in fear, in grief, in loss by the World War, there must have been something very reassuring in having their leader step down into their midst. Did he really mean to stand shoulder to shoulder with his people in winning back their old peace of mind, their old days of prosperous ease? Well, he was the same man who also had said that the only way he knew to straighten out any difference was by "a spirit of neighborly



goodwill." That sounded as if whatever was won would be won and shared together.

The truth of the matter is that Warren Harding or any other man growing up in a middle-sized Ohio town in the eighteen hundreds could not have gone very far unless he had played his game with his neighbors. That way of living had proved to be a good one away back when the Hardings had first crossed the Alleghenies from Pennsylvania into Ohio. And the Pennsylvania Hardings had, in turn, learned it from old Scotch ancestors who had worked with their neighbors to win food and shelter from the stern New England wilderness, who had gone out to fight with those same neighbors in the American Revolution, and with them had also struck south to take up new lands and to build new cabins.

Warren Harding's own grandfather had been among those who had later left the Pennsylvania settlement to take the western trail. That trail had ended for him in a homestead cabin out in Morrow County, Ohio. There, near the little settlement of Blooming Grove—later known as the town of Corsica—he had cleared his own fields, ploughed, and then planted them. But when it came to harvesting, when it came to building the new barn, he and all the other men, far and wide, traded days of labor. He and all the others, also, came together to build their roads, to improve their town. Of course, they had to do that or lose in the frontier fight. But they got much more out of those days than just the development of a new land. They learned, for one thing, who were the strong men and women among them—strong in mind and body and heart.

George Harding, Warren's father, and Warren, himself, were born in that same homestead cabin—the latter in 1865. So neither was very far away from those first frontier

days. George Harding cleared more acres, farmed them, and between times read medicine with a physician in Blooming Grove. Gradually, he came to spend more time studying than he did plowing and planting, until finally he came to be known as Dr. Harding to the whole countryside.

In the meantime he had married Phoebe Elizabeth Dickerson, a strongly built, Holland Dutch, splendid pioneer woman, deeply religious, thrifty, hard-working, who loved her home and took great delight in her flowers. There was nothing that small Warren Harding loved better than to go exploring in the thick woods, all by himself, and come back with his hands full of Johnny-jump-ups, adder tongues, spring beauties, for his mother. He kept right on bringing her flowers through all the years following. To be sure, later, they had to be gorgeous hot-house roses and fragrant violets. But that made no difference—they were brought just the same.

Hunting wild flowers for his mother, however, was by no means young Warren Harding's only work in life. There were the cows to take to the pasture and bring home again. There were never-ending stumps to be cleared from the fields. There were the spring planting, the summer hoeing, the fall cutting of corn. By the time that corn was stacked and the fields looked as if a tribe of Indians had set up their tepees under the November sun, school had begun.

That school was first in Corsica and later in Caledonia. It was in this second town that Warren Harding got his first whiff of the paste pot of a newspaper office. He was only twelve then but he was a very busy, very important young printer's devil who took to the routine of getting out the paper as a duck does to water.

With all of those days of going to school, of work in the office, of chores on the farm, of diving deeper and staying

under longer in Whetstone Creek, Warren Harding kept growing on and up until by the time he was fourteen he was over six feet tall. That was the year he entered Ohio Central College at Iberia. Evidently he was not at all embarrassed over his height. Long-legged, long-armed, awkward, he walked. right out into the center of life in that college. The course of study there was about the same as in any present-day high school. Young Harding carried it satisfactorily enough to graduate three years later with a degree of Bachelor of Science. Part of that time he was editor of the college paper—an experience he ever after claimed helped him greatly with his own paper. Also during those years, he lustily tooted the alto horn in the college band.

That band playing was another college experience he turned to good account. Gradually he learned to play every instrument except the slide trombone and E-flat cornet. But long before he had accomplished that, he had begun to believe that his band was the best band in that part of the country. Therefore, when a band contest was announced for Findlay, Ohio, he decided the time had come to prove his belief to the public. They—he and his fellow musicians—would go to Findlay. There they would win a prize. But when he approached the rest of the members, he found some of them lacking in faith. Nothing daunted, he went right on making his plans. He had no money, but he evidently was considered "good pay," for a town merchant endorsed his note covering a loan to finance the venture. Boosting up the courage of this one and that one, paying one member a full wage for a day, paying a doctor to look after the sick wife of another—Warren Harding finally got his band off to Findlay.

And they won a prize. To be sure it was the third and lowest one offered—but what of that? All the members of

little faith had left the concert hall by the time that prize was announced. Only three were left—the bass drum, the clarinet, and the alto horn. According to the program, the winning bands were to march triumphantly through the streets of Findlay. And, of course, to play while they marched. The three of the third prize band may have been a bit dashed by the prospect, but, if so, they made no sign. Instead, they boldly took their place in the procession. No drum ever rumbled more loudly; no clarinet ever shrilled more bravely; certainly no alto horn ever tooted more triumphantly. And no youths were ever received with a more enthusiastic welcome than those of that band when they marched back to Iberia.

If Warren Harding had just studied, run the paper, and boosted the college band, his day would have been comfortably busy. But money was not plentiful enough in the Harding family for this son to go his three years to Ohio Central without "working his way"—or largely doing so. He cut corn, sold brooms, helped to grade roads, and, together with his chum, painted barns—painted them red—a glorious red to rise up vividly out of that quiet Ohio land.

Then he had taught in a country school for a year. By then he had lost his awkwardness. Handsome, young, keenly awake to all life, he was most popular in the district. And he never worked harder in all of his life—so he said later. No doubt, therefore, he was glad to move on with his people to Marion, Ohio, two years after leaving college. There he found another band and, of course, joined it, to play, not an alto, but a tenor horn. Later he tried a B-flat cornet before the leader asked him whether he thought he could manage the "helican bass." Of course he could. And, of course, he did, looking every inch equal

to the huge bellowing brass slung over his head to rest securely on his broad, handsome shoulders.

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WARREN HARDING had not only attached himself to the Marion band, but to the *Marion Mirror* as well in his first days in the new town. There he began work as a reporter on one dollar a week with the promise of two dollars later if he could prove himself worthy of that much. Before he had time to reach that amount, however, the presidential campaign of 1884 came along with Grover Cleveland, Democrat, and James G. Blaine, Republican, fighting a fight to the finish. Warren Harding, a staunch, nineteen-year-old Republican, son of a Republican father, joined a Blaine club, marched in Blaine processions and wore, with other club members, the gray plug, symbol of loyal party allegiance. All of which was very well, until he, one day appeared at the *Mirror* office still wearing that plug. Now the *Mirror* was as emphatic for Cleveland as young Harding was for Blaine. That gray hat was the signal for strong action. As a result, the fiery young Republican found himself out of that office once and for all.

What next? Well, there was the *Marion Star*. Somebody had bought that paper not long before and had not been able to make it a financial success. Warren Harding's eyes fell upon it just as it was about to give up the ghost. He wanted that paper. He wanted that paper even if it were on the rocks. More than all that he meant to have it. So he approached his boyhood friend, Jack Warwick, with a plan. His friend liked the plan. Together they raked and scraped up three hundred dollars—nearly all of it borrowed, with Dr. Harding giving a good-natured security. And the paper was theirs.

At last, Warren Harding had his feet planted where they belonged. Nothing else mattered. That paper was his dearest possession then and clear on up to within a few years before his death. He learned everything there was to learn about running it. He gathered news. He wrote that news into stories. He set type. He made up the paper. He repaired all breaks in the machinery along the way. And, while working long hours every day and equally long hours many a night, he built up a certain newspaper creed —a work-a-day religion which expressed his ideals of what a good paper should stand for.

> "Remember [he said to his office force] there are two sides to every question. Get them."

Then again:

> "If it can possibly be avoided [he cautioned his men] never bring ignominy to an innocent man or child in telling of the misdeed or misfortune of a relative."

And finally:

> "I want this paper [he said] to be so conducted that it can go into any home without destroying the innocence of children."

While working to make his paper live up to his own creed, he never forgot the men working with him. He could always step over from his position as editor and proprietor to get the viewpoint of the laboring man in his plant. Because he could do that, he produced a co-operative scheme by which his employees shared profits in addition to receiving their regular wages for each day's work. He, himself, joined the Labor Union.

Is it any wonder, Warren Harding with such a creed, with such a friendly relationship in his everyday work, with a wife—for he had married Florence Kling, capable and tactful, whose practical sense made a perfect balance to his enthusiasm—is it any wonder that he said:

> "I would rather be a newspaper publisher than anything else in the world."

Is it any wonder, either, that with all of that to help him make a success of the *Marion Star* that, when he was president of the United States, he could and did sell that paper for $535,000?

Between that purchase and that sale, many, many other affairs—besides editing the *Marion Star*—had entered into the life of Warren Harding. There was his town of Marion, for example, to boost, much as he had boosted the Iberia band years before. Of course he was out in the midst of every group working for that town's improvement. Because he knew how to write and speak so that common people understood him easily, because his plans were generally for those people's own best interest, his plans usually carried.

No man with his newspaper ability, no man with his natural power to work with people, no man growing up, as he had, to work for the Republican party could or would keep out of the limelight of political life. His own particular part of that life began under the encouragement of the Ohio senator, Joseph B. Foraker. With that friend's backing, he ran for the Ohio State Senate in 1900. He was elected; then reelected. At the end of his second term he ran for lieutenant governor of Ohio on the ticket with Myron T. Herrick as governor. The ticket won. And Warren Harding began a close friendship with Governor

Herrick which grew steadily with the years that followed. Later, when that lieutenant governor became president, he honored his old chief by sending him as Ambassador Herrick to France.

In 1910 Warren Harding met his first political defeat when he ran for governor of his state. Although that defeat was probably due to quarrels in his own party, he was so disappointed that he considered withdrawing from all politics. But the attraction of the game was too strong and he was out again, in 1912, making the opening speech for President Taft's renomination. Two years later, he defeated his good friend, Joseph Foraker for the United States Senate. And at the same time kept that friendship through the campaign and the victory that followed.

His election as United States senator took him to Washington just as the World War was filling every man's mind with anxiety over what was to be America's part in the struggle. He was to stay right on in the Senate throughout all of the years of that war, and still on until he resigned to become president. He, therefore, was present for the declaration of war, and later, to support President Wilson's war policies. In addition, while in the Senate, he favored the Prohibition Amendment, the antistrike clause of the Cummings Railway Bill, the return of the railways to their owners a year after the war closed, and the freeing of American trade from tolls down in the Panama Canal.

When the armistice came he stood—with other Republican senators—bitterly against the League of Nations, particularly against that section which would force the United States to go to any part of the world to take part in any war whether the United States had anything at stake or not, in that war. Outside of that section, he

was just generally opposed to the League because he thought he saw in it the possibility of a growing power that would, in time, destroy or decrease the individual power of the United States.

But he, with his group, did see that something had to be done in connection with new world relations growing out of America's part in the war. In his keynote speech at the 1916 Republican National Convention, he expressed himself as convinced that the United States could no longer shut herself off from the rest of the world. If he discarded the League, President Wilson's plans which had been accepted by the representatives of world powers gathered at Versailles—what did he propose to take its place?

> "An international arbitration and a world court for justifiable disputes [he claimed] appeals to all who think justice is sustained in reason rather than in armed disputes.
>
> "But [he went on] it does not require super-government to effect them—nor surrender of nationality and independence of action to sanction them."

<4>

ALTOGETHER, there was never any mistake about where Warren G. Harding stood while he was in the Senate. Not that he ever was outstanding in the expression of his views. But his own party group always knew exactly where he was on a question and it could depend on him not to change his mind. In short, he was safe. Therefore, when the Republican National Convention convened in Chicago in the summer of 1920 to wear itself out in the heat of those days trying to settle on a candidate, Warren

Harding rode in on the tenth ballot as the nominee for president with Calvin Coolidge coming along as vice-president.

There were many more outstanding men than he in in public life. There were others at the convention whom the nation knew much better. In fact, outside of Ohio, outside of the Washington political circle, he was really known to very few. But his fellow senators had found he played their game according to the rules laid down by their leader. Perhaps, as president, he could be counted on to do the same for his friends in the Senate.

Instead of going out, up and down the land, to wage his campaign fight, Warren Harding stayed at home. Why not? There was his enormous front porch, comfortably cool. There was his own town of Marion to give him a feeling of solid security. So he stayed right there and let people come to him. And, as in the campaign of McKinley, they came, but they came in much larger numbers. He made speeches and, in many of them, criticized what he claimed was Woodrow Wilson's too great use of his presidential power, especially in connection with the League of Nations. By so doing, he calmed the fears of those who dreaded anything that would turn the United States from an individual nation, secure in its distance from other nations, to one of a group, active in the center of world affairs. To those who were not sure the United States should not leave behind its old time self-centered content to advance into that center, Warren Harding promised to arrange some sort of association with world powers that would still leave the Americans uncontrolled by European power. In short, he promised that if he were elected, he would work to restore the United States to its old time normal, prosperous, peaceful, life.

Since many of the people of the United States longed for that return more than for any other one thing—they voted for Warren G. Harding. And he was elected president. Elected by a majority that showed how weary the people were of war. How eager many were to keep America safe for Americans. Elected to face a world whose money market had been hopelessly upset by the demands of war; to face a greatly increased debt with a treasury not receiving enough revenue to meet the running expenses of the government. Elected, also, to do something to keep his promise concerning that government's international relations.

Did he think all of that? Is that why he said that March 4, 1921:

> "I have taken the solemn oath of office on that passage of holy writ wherein it is asked 'What doth the Lord require but to do justly and to love mercy and walk humbly with my God?' This I plight to God and my country."

Back of him stood the cabinet of his choice: Charles E. Hughes, secretary of state; Herbert Hoover, secretary of commerce; Andrew W. Mellon, secretary of the treasury. Those three he selected because of their outstanding ability to meet the high demands he was to make of them. But many of the other members of that body were selected because the President felt under obligation to pay off old political debts.

Since the problem most needing immediate attention was that of the treasury, President Harding began at once to reduce all expenditures; to revise taxation; to urge the adoption of an adequate national budget plan. On the question of tariff, he recommended the passing of an emer-

gency tariff bill, while working towards the establishment of a permanent policy with a sliding world scale of duties to meet circumstances as they arose.

Second to the financial demands stood those concerning foreign relations. Several minor differences were settled promptly by quick action. For example, Secretary Hughes, by a decisive voice, ended threats of war between Panama and Costa Rica; the Japanese trying to claim rights to set up a mandate over Yap were refused those rights; Soviet Russia's request for trade relations with the United States was also refused.

But, while all of those problems had to be met, the one of major interest to America and the world was that connected with the League of Nations and the Versailles treaty of peace. To end the quarrel with Germany, a separate peace treaty was signed. To meet his campaign promises to do something to further world peace and yet not enter the League, President Harding called the International Conference on Armament Limitation. He, himself, personally sent invitations to the foreign powers to come to Washington. To the great surprise of many Americans every invitation was accepted. The conference first came together on Armistice Day, November 11, 1921. About all that it accomplished in the days that followed was to establish a feeling of good will. If there was any one thing Warren Harding could do it was that, with his natural general friendliness, and his life-long way of being a good neighbor wherever he was.

Perhaps that was why the conference was the proudest achievement of President Harding's administration. When the following Congress assembled, trouble began to pile up for him. There were people in the United States—many of them—who wanted the government to take its

place in the League and share fully in whatever advantages or disadvantages there might be in such a world gathering. There were others who—as usual—objected to the administration's tariff policy. And there were hosts of honest people who were outraged by revelations of the dishonest handling of public resources among President Harding's own appointees at Washington. The country pretty generally trusted the President himself. But when the suspicions against his friends were found to be true, people quite naturally blamed him for not protecting himself and the nation against those friends. The criticism grew widespread and sharp. The Republican party's majority grew correspondingly less in Congress. Splits came in that greatly decreased majority.

Something had to be done. If he could come close to his people, Warren Harding believed he could win them back. So he left Washington to travel through the West. He not only went to the coast but on to Alaska. He never was more vividly alive to everything and everybody. He never spoke with more simple, direct sincerity.

> "I am thinking [he said once] of the law of the Golden Rule, a statute from the Man of Nazareth, who brought new peace and new hope to mankind and proclaimed service to men the highest tribute to God."

On his way back down the western coast, he grew very tired. At Vancouver he fell ill. Even so, he insisted on greeting people.

> "We do rise to heights, at times [he told them one day] when we look for good rather than evil in others and give consideration to the views of all."

And that was the last time he spoke publicly. Greatly wearied by his efforts to keep up with his schedule he was attacked by pneumonia. Even then he resisted the disease and grew better. But just as the nation thought he was out of danger, his tired heart stopped beating. That was August 2, 1923. No citizen of the United States living in that time will ever forget the long, long watch Warren Harding's fellow countrymen kept while his funeral train traveled from the Pacific coast back to Washington. Whatever blame had been his, whatever bitterness of people or party—all was forgotten in those still August days. At Washington the nation did him honor with all the great pomp and ceremony due to a president. But Judge Hughes spoke of him to Congress in a way his fellow politicians liked better when he said:

"Nothing human was alien to him."

Then, at last, after all had been done by his government leaders that could be done, Warren Harding was taken back to Marion, Ohio, back to sleep among his own neighbors, among "just plain folks" whom he knew and liked so well.

II. CALVIN COOLIDGE

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It was August 3, 1923. Far out across the continent, Warren Harding's funeral train was just getting under way for the return east. In New York, the afternoon rush hour was beginning. Towering skyscrapers near one of the huge railway stations had emptied their thousands of men and women into streets already a tangle of struggling trucks and taxis. Suddenly, a shrill whistle cut through the hot noisy mass. A short, stocky-built traffic policeman whirled first one way, then another, as he shot a white-gloved hand in the air with an imperative gesture "to stop."

The street cleared as if by magic. The shoving crowd stood suddenly, unbelievably still. A motorcycle roared out of the great yawning entrance to the railway station. Another and another followed until they were speeding in formation on up the street and around the corner two blocks away. Following them came a great soft-running automobile on the rear seat of which sat a pale, stern-faced man, staring straight ahead. A startled gasp of "Coolidge" ran through the crowd. Here and there men turned to look at each other as if deeply stirred. Then the traffic policeman relaxed and signaled "Go ahead." Once more New York's rush hour was off in full swing.

Only a little over twelve hours before the message of Warren Harding's death had flashed out from San Francisco, California, to reach Plymouth, Vermont, in the quiet hours of the night. Twelve hours—and yet in that time, a man had stepped out of the vice-presidency into the presidency, had sped down from the hills of Vermont, had crossed Manhattan, and had already had time to be gripped with the responsibility of being chief executive for over 122,600,000 people.

But for the Coolidge family there had been quite time enough. Why not? Life for that family had always been stripped bare of outward expressions of deep feeling. That left the way clear for action even in the face of a great calamity. Whatever tall, well-seasoned, white-haired John Coolidge had felt when he received that night message, he had given no sign except for a trembling in his voice as he called his son. That slight show of emotion, however, had been quite enough to warn Calvin Coolidge that his father had news of tremendous importance.

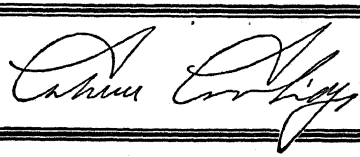
When he heard that news, did he, himself, waste any time in gathering himself together to face what was ahead? Not the son of John Coolidge. Not the citizen of Plymouth, Vermont. He dressed carefully, swiftly. Then, before going forth to meet the greatest responsibility of his life—just as centuries of Coolidges had done before him—he took time to pray—to pray to the God of his people that he might meet that responsibility as befitted the American called to carry it.

After that he had taken time to wire the wife of Warren Harding his deep sympathy for her and to express to her his own grief over the loss of the chief whom he had loyally supported during sixteen months of national service. Next, he had stopped to write—by the light of that famous old kerosene lamp—a message of reassurance to the shocked nation. All of that done he stood up, quietly, simply, to have his own father, as the village justice of the peace, administer the oath of the presidency.

About him were all the old familiar things of his life. There was the black walnut furniture brought proudly from Boston when he was a little child. There was his mother's Bible near-by. There was his father—just as he had always been in all of his son's life—steadily wise and



Samuel Bernard Schaffer



sure. Nothing had changed even although those few solemn words had brought him the highest honor the American people had to bestow.

What was true of the inside of the old Coolidge home was even more true of the village outside. There the few white houses, the church, the schoolhouse, the blacksmith shop, the combination post office, store, and cottage which was his own and his sister Abigail's birthplace—there they all stood safely secure and as always. And so did the several clusters of farm buildings with their fields stretching back to the hills rising like a green wall to shut in the peace of Plymouth, Vermont, and to shut out the anxious world beyond.

And yet, nobody knowing that village and the people from which Calvin Coolidge had sprung could ever doubt for a moment that either he or his father was keenly alive to all they were living through in the quiet hours of that night. But why talk about it? Everybody there understood. In fact, there had never been a time when those within that house and those without in the village had not understood and accepted as a matter of course that each had a share of service to neighbor, to town, to state, to country. If Calvin Coolidge was walking out to take that share as president of the United States, he would find the same fundamental principles working well there that his father, John Coolidge, had found worked well in Plymouth, Vermont. They, his own kin, his neighbors, were proud of the honor that had come to him—yes. Let him look to it that he proved worthy of that pride.

2

PERHAPS the man Calvin Coolidge felt the responsibility of living up to that standard quite as keenly as he felt the

responsibility facing him down at the Capitol. After all, was one very much more difficult than the other? Not to a Coolidge. An obligation was an obligation. And they—the Coolidges—kept their obligations. Vermont had tried them out along that line for around one hundred and fifty years and had never found them wanting. There had been Captain John Coolidge, the first of this name, to give the family a fine start in the valley by coming up from Massachusetts to make his home on the land stretching back from the old military road toward the Green Mountains. He had served in the American Revolution. After that he was to serve in helping to build up a nation. He began by adding land to his first tract until he had enough to leave a farm to each of his five sons at his death. While doing that he took his own part in seeing that the laws of his new land were understood and followed in the community where he lived. He did his own part in building up that community. Log cabins gave place to frame houses. A flour mill, a sawmill, a store appeared. In short, life in Plymouth, Vermont, was running very well by the time Captain John went to rest.

And it was running just about the same when Calvin Coolidge was born there in that five-room cottage back of the store on Independence Day, 1872. His mother's family—the Moors—lived right across the road in a large old house built for a hotel. That mother, as Calvin Coolidge says, bore the name of two empresses—Victoria Josephine. And surely no empress ever received more chivalrous allegiance, more devotion, than she received from her small son. Perhaps the fact that she was very frail, almost an invalid for years, had much to do with the sort of devotion he felt for her. But even if she were fragile in body, she was quite able to give her two children very wonderful care. Gentle and lovely, with her brown hair showing glints of gold, and her

face lighting up over the beauty of her hill country, she was also sternly unyielding in her training of what was wrong and what was right. Is it any wonder that when she died she left her small twelve-year old son with a certain loneliness which was to stay on through the years—always?

Not that he was a son who ever wanted for love or care. By no means. All about him were his own kindred. Besides his mother's people just a few steps away, there were his Grandfather and Grandmother Coolidge living less than a hundred rods from his home. They had peacocks strutting about the farmyard. They had horses to ride—to ride standing up behind his grandfather before that grandfather died when Calvin was six. And there was the Bible to read even in those early years during his grandfather's last illness. Also that Bible to study carefully because his grandmother was superintendent of the Sunday school held in the village church. His pride might have made him learn his lesson for that school, but if it had not—his love for his grandmother would have done so. Didn't she give hours to him when he was a little fellow, even when her hands were busy spinning the yarn for his winter stockings and while weaving the linen for table and beds in his father's home?

That father had bought a new home just across the street from the old one when his son was only a few years old. In that new home the house was larger with a main part, an ell, and, later, a porch and a house barn. There were two acres of ground belonging to it, with fine old maples near-by and a blacksmith shop not far off with its blazing forge and dark shadows always waiting, full of interest to any boy.

But, above all those many people and things to fill the days of small Calvin Coolidge, there was his father to watch,

to follow, to listen to. No man in all Vermont had more irons in the fire than John Coolidge. When his son had been barely two months old, he—the father—had gone off to Montpelier to serve in the State legislature. He had been reelected twice. In the meantime, there was the Plymouth store to manage. Fortunately, he had ended his work in the legislature when his father died leaving him to run the old farm. About the same time he took over that responsibility, he sold the store to his wife's brother. But even by reducing the demands on his time that much, he still had his days full to overflowing. Besides the usual routine of sugar making, plowing, planting, harvesting, and getting ready for winter, John Coolidge was so skilled with his hands that he did the most difficult repair work on the farm machinery, and also the work of a carpenter in keeping the farm buildings in good shape. To all of these private affairs, he added that of his public service as moderator or selectman in the town meetings, as deputy sheriff, as justice of the peace, and always as a notary public.

With such a father, with such generations back of him, Calvin Coolidge could not do much else but grow up with a healthy respect for hard work honestly done. By the time he was twelve, he, in his gingham shirt, blue cotton overalls, and barefeet, could turn a clean-cut, straight furrow, guiding the plow with one hand and driving the sturdy old oxen with the other. Then he planted what he had ploughed; or helped to do so. He raked hay. He picked apples. He chopped and corded wood. He tapped maple trees in the spring and listened eagerly for the drip of the sap into the bucket beneath the spill.

And in between chopping the wood and tapping the maples, he went to school with some two dozen other boys and girls in the little stone schoolhouse. There he learned

just what the rest learned—to read, to write, to figure clear through the arithmetic and back again, and quite a little United States history.

If anybody thinks, however, that even all this work could crowd out fun in life for the people of Plymouth, Vermont, he is much mistaken. There were the spelling and husking bees; there were the singing schools, county fairs, and once in a great while, a red-letter day when the whole family drove off at early dawn to go to a circus some place not too far away. Besides all of these irregular happenings, there were the regular holidays—Thanksgiving, Christmas, and, of course, the Fourth of July, with its extra thrill for the Coolidge family since it was also the birthday of the son of the family.

3

CALVIN COOLIDGE did not have many years to enjoy all of these things before he went off to Black River Academy where his father and mother had gone before him. In fact, he was only thirteen when that happened. To be sure, that academy was only about a dozen miles distant, but a dozen miles in a Vermont winter was something for which to get ready in those days. Once there, Calvin Coolidge studied about as the other boys and girls did. Sometimes he worked on Saturdays. Sometimes he went home over the week-end, walking the twelve miles now and then to get there, but more often riding with his father who was rarely so busy he could not come for him. Finally, he graduated with his class of nine. In addition to the facts from his textbooks, he had stowed away two things: first, his experience with factory men on the Saturdays he had stood working next to them; second, a deep, wondering awe for the wisdom and vision contained in the Constitution of the United States.

After graduating from the Academy, it had been planned that he should go straight on to Amherst College the next fall. He even reached there, but on the way he was taken with a severe cold and had to return home. There he read Sir Walter Scott's swinging narrative poems full of their border adventures, studied for a time at his old academy, and at St. Johnsbury before he finally entered Amherst in the fall of 1891. For some reason, Calvin Coolidge found his first two college years uphill work. It took considerable encouragement from his father to get him over them, but once over, he got his own stride to march through the last two quite easily and to come out at the end, graduating with high honors.

During those years what else had happened? Well, not much of anything to attract attention to the student from Plymouth, Vermont. In fact, there was nothing he wanted less than attention. But a few of the strongest men of the college began to watch Calvin Coolidge. They saw that he could work hard and that he did. They saw that he got far when he worked. They heard him say only a few things but when he said them they counted. They found that behind his rather stern face, there lurked a keen human sense of life all about him. So those men decided he was a good man to be Grove Orator at commencement time. And he was. In addition to winning that honor, he won a prize offered by the Sons of the Revolution for the best college essay written on the subject, "Principles Fought for in the War of the American Revolution." Calvin Coolidge knew those principles. Of course he could write well concerning them.

For those principles were much the same, fundamentally, that had always formed the basis of John Coolidge's decision in Plymouth town meetings. They were also the same on which he settled many of the neighborhood differences

over property rights. After all he had always found a close connection between national and individual rights. Justice and fair dealing were needed in both. Calvin Coolidge had not listened to his father and neighbors discussing all of that without coming to believe much as they did.

It was but natural then that he should turn his attention to the study of law when he left Amherst. And it is not much wonder that his father was in sympathy with his son even although such a choice of life work meant that a Coolidge was now to leave the farm land of his fathers. It was not easy for John Coolidge to have his son do that. It was not easy for the son to go. But, still, it was easier then than it might have been years before, for John Coolidge had married again—married a splendid woman of the countryside whose keen mind and warm sympathy had done much to make Calvin Coolidge's homecomings happy ones all through his Amherst days. What he knew about her made it easier for him to leave his father.

To leave him and go down to Northampton, Massachusetts, to study law in an office there. That study took only twenty months to earn him admission to the bar, and to land him in his own office, with the determination to make his profession support him the very first year. Up until that time his father had paid all of his expenses. To be sure those expenses had been unbelievably low. What is more, whatever the sum had been—set by the school—one could be very certain that Calvin Coolidge had cut it down to the last penny, and once having cut it, never overdrew, never ran in debt.

Of course, Calvin Coolidge had earned money during those years—earned it at odd jobs during the school term and often on the farm during vacations. But John Coolidge would allow none of that to be spent. It went into a bank

immediately and it stayed there to give his son a feeling of financial security—even in a limited fashion. Yes, John Coolidge had always stood ready to make life for his son as easy in money matters as he could. He still stood proudly ready to continue doing so when his son completed his three years' law course in two. But Calvin Coolidge had his jaw set. He was now to be "on his own" if ever he was. So after a few months he cut loose financially from his father. He was then twenty-five. It was not easy going that first year. And not always in the years that followed. But he made both ends meet and gradually built up a practice that made things easier financially and made him a reputation professionally.

4

In the meantime, he had almost at once begun to take an interest in Northampton town politics. Why shouldn't he? All of the Coolidge men had had that interest in Plymouth, Vermont. Not only the men had had that interest, but his own Grandmother Coolidge had watched, like a hawk, over the interests of the village school, and, then, had voted promptly and regularly to see that those interests were developed for the great good of the oncoming generations. Therefore, only two years after beginning his law practice, Calvin Coolidge was already deeply enough involved in his new town's politics to be elected a councilman of Northampton.

Once started, he kept right on going. His first county office was clerk of the courts. His first state one was his membership in the House of Legislature. After that, he was called back to Northampton to be mayor for two terms. Then came the State Senate with three years of service as speaker of that body before he was elected three successive

terms for lieutenant governor, and then for governor of Massachusetts in 1919.

It had taken him about twenty years after opening his law office to build up a substantial practice and to reach the highest office in his state. How had he done it? Well, he had good common sense in handling public as well as private business. He used it. He believed in economy of time, effort, and money. He practiced what he believed. He talked very little but when he did talk he said what he had to say briefly, simply, forcibly. Then he quit. Why say more? But he went right along clearing up all waste. He was the first Massachusetts governor to arrange and submit an executive budget for consideration. He cut the number of state officers. He did his own work easily and effectively.

And then in the midst of all this came the Boston police riot. That trouble began in early September, 1919, when the Boston Police Commissioner refused to permit the city police to ally themselves with the American Federation of Labor. Whereupon, over half of the force left their posts of duty. That happened in the afternoon. By the next morning a riot was on. The mayor of the city stepped in and ordered all the state guards stationed there to come to the rescue. In addition, he asked the Governor for extra troops. The Governor ordered three regiments to go to Boston at once. The next day a general strike was threatened. It was time for a vigorous show of authority. Governor Coolidge made it by calling out the entire state militia. Order was restored. There was no particular confusion. There was no shouting. But there was speed, action, and a breath-taking force.

That done, Governor Coolidge took his place behind the Police Commissioner where he stood like a rock of support when the Commissioner refused to re-admit to service the policemen who had deserted their posts. There was a great

outcry over that refusal. Many people were in sufficient sympathy with the men to want them returned. But Calvin Coolidge ended the protest when he said:

"There is no right to strike against public safety by anybody, anywhere, at any time."

When somebody told him he would offend organized labor by his opposition, and that such offense would probably mean defeat at his next election, the Governor answered:

"It does not matter."

Of course not. How could it to a man who had lived as he had—close to the hills and with a hills people who had no trouble whatever in telling what was right and what was wrong and in following what they knew. After all, the American people like such straightforward dealing. Certainly Massachusetts liked it in Calvin Coolidge, for he was reelected two months later by a large majority.

And the country at large showed its approval by beginning to think and talk of that Vermont man as excellent timber for the coming presidential campaign. Then came that Republican National Convention where the deadlock was broken by nominating Warren Gamaliel Harding for president. At the same time, Calvin Coolidge went in easily for vice-president.

Once elected vice-president, the man from Plymouth, Vermont, fitted into his chair as if he had never been anywhere else. With a nice respect for the position that was his, he made no effort to extend his influence or power beyond it. With a fine sense of loyalty, he quietly, effectively, supported the President. That President invited

him to meet with the cabinet. He did so—again to fit in but also again to keep silent.

For two years he presided over the Senate and went his own way as vice-president before that summer of 1923 rolled around to take President Harding west and take him back to his own Vermont hills. There he was to have only a short time to listen to the homely wisdom and good common sense of his townspeople, to tramp out over the land of the Coolidge family with his father, and to stand still watching the sunsets his mother had loved while the fresh, crisp mountain air blew the political cobwebs out of his mind and heart. One is glad that he had even a short time for those reassuring things before that wire came ripping its way through the night, bringing the message of the President's death.

5

But even with the reserve of rest and peace brought him by his Vermont days, anyone standing on the edge of New York's rush hour crowd to see Calvin Coolidge ride swiftly by on his way that late August afternoon, knew that he had been shaken as few men ever are shaken. Was that the reason he kept so very still through the succeeding weeks? Or was it because he had no intention of stepping until he saw where and why? Whatever the reason, he did not really break his silence officially until in the following December when he made his first very characteristic inaugural speech. In that speech he set down—without any fine words or high-flung phrases—exactly what he approved and what he disapproved. By the time he was through anyone could tell that he meant to maintain the tariff without frequent revision; to disapprove of the soldiers' bonus and of widespread government relief for

farmers; to stand for peaceful cooperation with foreign powers and support of the world court; but to stand against the United States' becoming a member of the League of Nations.

The common people of the United States listened to him and they understood what he said. They began to have confidence in him because of his plain, everyday way of reasoning and acting. All of which was good to know but none of which was to help him much—at first—in affairs at Washington. There, the split in the Republican support which had begun under President Harding grew wider. Bills vetoed by President Coolidge were passed over that veto. Others he favored received barely enough votes to make them secure. The Teapot Dome scandals which had reared their ugly heads during the time of President Harding heaved high until they threatened to destroy all force of the administration for good and to bring shame to the whole Republican party. In the midst of all that Calvin Coolidge stood like one of his own Vermont rocks. He refused to act on any rumor. He appointed a special counsel to investigate the corrupt situation. He judged no man until that counsel presented the full results of its investigation. When those results were finally in hand, President Coolidge acted according to the evidence he had. And on nothing else.

At last that difficult winter passed. Spring came bringing with it the 1924 nominating conventions. It was then that the voice of the people of the United States rang out with no uncertain force. Congress had heckled, had opposed, had occupied months with political bickering. But that was all over—at least for a time—and the plain folk of the land told those congressmen to look to it or they—the congressmen—would lose the votes that sent them to Washington.

And political leaders listened. Many of them would have done so without the warning; for many of them had come, as those people had, to believe in Calvin Coolidge. So he was nominated.

Through that summer and fall he stayed on in Washington going about his business of running the Government. The few speeches he did make were made only to emphasize his belief in economy, efficiency, and in the World Court. In November, he was elected with a popular vote of 15,700,000.

Now that he was president by the undeniable vote of his people, did Calvin Coolidge show any particular gratification over his triumph? Not at all. What did he think about? Who knows? But when the time came on March 4, 1925, for him to take his inaugural oath, he opened the Bible to place his hand on the Gospel of St. John—the gospel which had rung in his heart ever since his Grandfather Coolidge had read it to him up in the old Vermont farmhouse long, long years before. So far he had kept faith. He meant still to do so or as far as he had wisdom to see.

The foundation of that wisdom had been laid also in those long-ago days of his boyhood. It was then he had learned that taxes had to be paid; but that often in the paying men and women had to sacrifice much. It was then he had learned that debt could burden a man so as to hinder his freedom and progress. As president, therefore, he worked to reduce income taxes; to refund other taxes whenever the treasury surplus permitted; to reduce government running expenses; and, as fast as possible, to lower the national debt. He believed that the way to bring relief to the farmers was through some form of cooperative marketing. He believed that the only sure way to handle such disasters as the

Mississippi flood was to turn them over to experts who understood how to determine the cost, not only of relief but of preventing such calamities in the future. (Fortunately for him and the country he had such experts conveniently near amoung the members of his own cabinet. He now sought them out daily.) There was Secretary Mellon to advise him concerning the treasury. There was Herbert Hoover on all matters of commerce as well as on others concerning waste—in time, money, or human effort.

And there was Secretary Kellogg to sustain his policies in foreign relations. A strong hand, a wise head, and a large supply of tact were needed in the West Indies, in Panama, in Nicaragua and Mexico. They all were evidently available, for affairs in all of those sections ran along safely. In connection with overseas relations, efforts were made to enter the World Court. The Senate even voted in January, 1926, to take part in that court but in doing so they made so many reservations foreign powers would not consider the plan. The next year a conference for the limitation of armaments was held at Geneva with the United States taking part. Not much was accomplished. But when Secretary Kellogg and M. Briand worked out, by themselves, a plan to outlaw war, all of the great world powers—including the United States—accepted it as well as many of the smaller ones.

Then with some progress made toward securing world peace—with tremendous progress towards unparalleled prosperity going on at home, with everything pointing towards a renomination of Calvin Coolidge as president, he startled the nation by sending forth the message:

"I do not choose to run for president in 1928."

That was all. Of course political leaders and many other plain people could not believe any man really meant such a statement to be final. But any one knowing the Coolidge family, or Plymouth, Vermont, knew nothing further need be said. Calvin Coolidge had spoken.

And anyone who knew him would know that he would go from Washington back among his old friends. He chose Northampton, Massachusetts. He chose his old law office there. And for a time he chose the old home where he and his wife had gone to live years before, where his two sons had been born, and where he had lived very simply and very happily. Later, he moved to a larger, lovelier home where even a greater quiet and peace could be possible. From there he still travels north to Plymouth, Vermont. John Coolidge —his father—is no longer there. But there are old neighbors who remember him. There is the farm willed him for life by his Grandfather Coolidge. And there are the green hills standing serene and still against the New England sky.

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ROBERT FROST, the New England poet, once said,

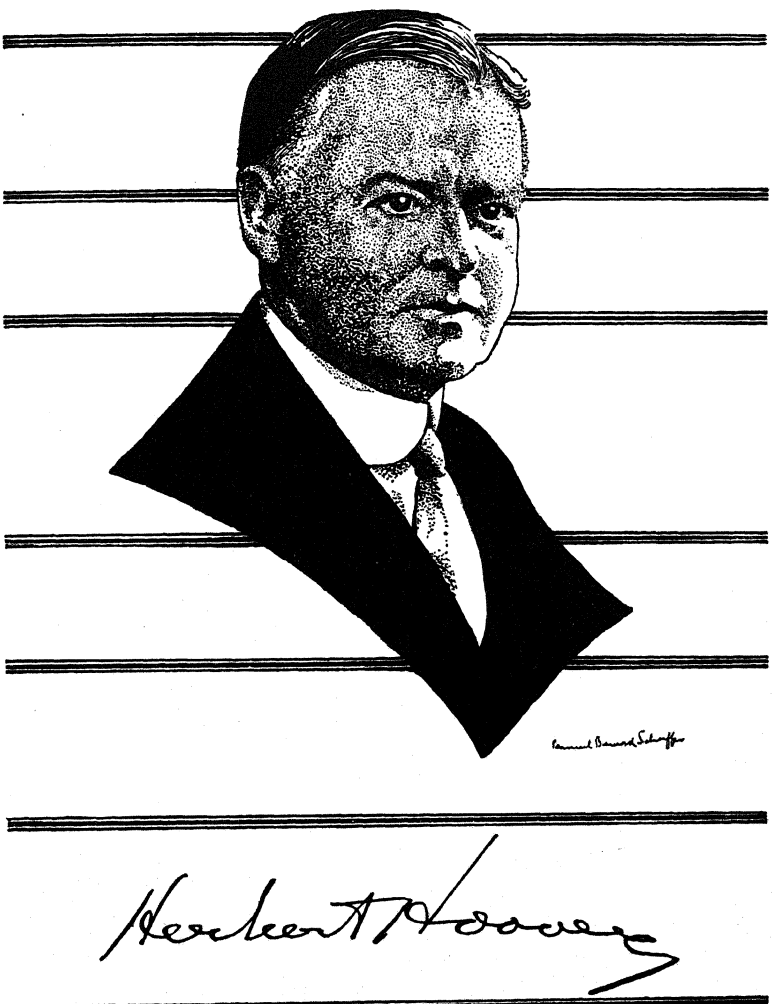
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
*And that has made all the difference.**

For over ten years the United States had been standing at the point where "two roads diverged." Should she keep to the one she had traveled for over a century and a quarter—the road of George Washington's policy of neutrality in world affairs? Or should she strike off down the "one less traveled by"—the one taking her on into the heart of those affairs?

Then on March 4, 1929, Herbert Clark Hoover took the president's chair. No man had ever sat in that high place of vantage who could see farther down those two roads than he. No man had come to that place who had traveled more miles both in his own and in foreign lands. No man had brought with him a keener, more practical understanding of different races, different nationalities, different classes of men than he. And, although not primarily a politician, no American man had ever become president who had a more intimate knowledge of what it meant to work diplomatically with foreign governments.

And he came from a family of travelers—of travelers whose goal was always well set up before they started on any journey. There were those Hoovers of France, who, because of religious persecution, had crossed over into Holland. There they heard of a new land across the sea

*From *Mountain Interval*, "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost, by permission of Henry Holt and Company.



Herbert Hoover

where there seemed to be no limit to the acres a man might possess and where he could worship God as he pleased. So they sailed away to that land in 1738. Because they did not like the very formal manner of worship in Maryland where they first stopped, they went on through the forests until they found a colony of their own Quaker people down in North Carolina. Then came stories of a country of still fairer promise beyond the mountains to the north. They again struck the trail, a trail that was to lead them first to Ohio and then, finally, on in a long line of prairie schooners over the Middle West plains to Iowa.

There in the little new town of West Branch, Jesse Hoover and his wife, Hulda Minthorn, the parents of Herbert Hoover, set up their home in a small, rather dreary, house. The Minthorns were also Quakers—Quakers from a good old Connecticut stock of scholarly people who had sailed from England before the Hoovers had left Holland. Hulda, the young wife of Jesse Hoover, who had had some university training, was a woman of vivid personality and a speaker with real power to attract and hold her audience.

Jesse Hoover was the West Branch blacksmith, a good one, who was an ever-present help to the other settlers in mending their farm machinery, as well as in selling them new implements. Nobody could even start living out on that prairie land without a plow. Once that plow handle was under the guiding hand of the farmer, he could and did turn great stretches of tall waving prairie grass and brilliantly blooming prairie flowers ruthlessly over into furrows of rich black loam, glistening under the sun as far as the eye could see. Those furrows meant a steady prosperity both to the farmer and Jesse Hoover so that the latter gave up the blacksmith shop, increased his stock of farm machinery

and added a pump factory to his business. He also moved his family into a better house with large maple trees shading it from the broiling hot sun of summer, and doing their best to shield it from the howling blizzards of winter.

Then when Herbert Hoover was only six, a tree fell on his father, pinning him down so that he lay helpless for hours and died of exposure afterwards. Even though just well started in his new home, he had saved enough to leave a small amount of property to his family. Hulda Hoover meant to save every cent of that amount for the education of her three children. But because she could speak so well, because she was such a sturdy Quaker, and because the new land needed preachers—she became one. She traveled far and wide over the almost trackless prairies. She became famous all about her home as a woman of great spiritual power. But there was no salary connected with any such work in those days. To be sure she received a free-will offering—but money was not plentiful enough on that Iowa frontier to make those offerings large. Just how life would have gone for her and her family if she had lived, nobody can tell, but a little over four years after her husband had died, she followed him.

Herbert Hoover was then only between ten and eleven. Fortunately for him and his brother and sister, there were plenty of Hoover and Minthorn relatives living in West Branch and the country near-by. Still more fortunately, they were the sort of people who took care of their own, so the three children were not only given homes, but were given good ones. Herbert, himself, went to live with his uncle, Allan Hoover, on a farm near the town. There he helped with the chores, hoed in the garden, and, of course, planted corn. How that corn grew—grew until its slender stalks reared themselves above the heads of the tall Iowa

farmer. How it stretched out in great fields of wind-tossed green in summer, in golden phalanxes under the November sky—stretched on and on until the rim of the sky shut down to the ground.

In between times of tending that corn, there were plenty of days to go coasting on a home-made sled, to set traps for rabbits, to swim in the muddy old swimming hole, or to sit still—very still— on the bank of a stream holding tight to the willow pole with its piece of string dangling a hook in the clear water. That hook, which cost a penny, held a worm which the small fisherman had dug by himself and had spit on religiously. If luck were his, that worm caught a fish. If not—oh well, there was still the warm lazy sunshine and—the stillness. Next to those hours, Herbert Hoover liked best, perhaps, the ones he spent talking with the village dentist who was also a geologist with a fascinating collection of specimens, and who, apparently, liked the boy's wondering questions well enough to keep right on answering them.

Then there were his memories of that visit to his uncle who was Indian Commissioner out in Indian Territory. He had been only eight at the time. But had he ever forgotten how he had frozen in his tracks when he ran around a corner straight into the Indian chief all dressed up in war paint and feathers? He had not. Neither had he forgotten how the Indian boys had taught him to scout down a trail, how to catch prairie chickens and cook those chickens over an open fire with the smoke from the burning wood and the sizzling game filling the clean, crisp air.

2

Was it any wonder then that when Dr. John Minthorn decided to move on out to Newberg, Oregon, that Herbert

Hoover went along? Being a Hoover himself, he was, of course, always ready to go any place, any time, if something worth while lay at the end of the journey. There was usually something worth while for him at the end of John Minthorn's journeys. This time his uncle became the first superintendent of a small Quaker College in Newberg. Of course, Herbert Hoover attended that college. Outside of doing that and sleeping in a rather bleak room in the college, he came to know the five hundred people in the town, and also to know all of their few books which he read and thumbed over from cover to cover.

He did not have much time to do all that before his uncle moved on to Salem with his young nephew going along, driving a horse and cow all the way. Of course, that meant the boy could not travel swiftly, but what of that? There was that new western land to wonder about—to wonder what lay under the tall rugged mountains, what lay beyond the ocean washing its western shore. Would he ever know? Who could tell? In the meantime, right then, it was his business to get that horse, cow, and himself on to Salem.

After reaching that town, Dr. Minthorn opened a real-estate office with his nephew working as office boy. Before very long, however, that office boy knew more about the details of the firm's business than any of the grown-up members did. Those members found themselves turning to him for figures, for dates. And he knew both. Between the duties of his new work, Herbert Hoover was doubled up over an arithmetic or algebra back in a corner. Then, one day, an engineer appeared to talk to the older men about the development of a mine. The office boy listened. He edged into the group. He asked a question. He and that engineer began to talk. And then he was staggered to hear himself asked:

"Why don't you be an engineer yourself?"

He, Herbert Hoover? Why not? A new university with a good mining and geology department was to be opened in California the very next year. No charge was to be made for tuition. If he cared enough to go, he could find work to pay his living expenses.

Suddenly out from that Salem real-estate office stretched a shining road for the feet of its slender, shy, sixteen-year old office boy. And that road was to make "all the difference" in his life. Did he want to go to that college? He did. What was more he meant to do so if he could get by the entrance examinations. At any rate, he meant, from the second that engineer finished talking, to be an engineer himself.

So he began to get ready for the California university. The only way open to do that was to study mathematics at a night school. He did that, then went to Portland to take an examination under the head of the mathematics department of Stanford. He failed. But even so there was a thoroughness in what he set down on his paper which led the examiner to believe the boy could and would make the entrance if given another chance. So he gave him the chance. And that is why Herbert Hoover appeared at Stanford that October, 1891, in the midst of all the pounding, all the litter, of the few weeks of finishing the new college buildings. He had come to study under the university instructors for his entrance examinations.

He passed his mathematics with flying colors at the end of that study. He came through more slowly with his history and literature. And he stuck, dead still, far short of passing in his English composition. But he was a "special." He was planning to register as engineer, so he was con-

ditioned in English composition. And was off at last on his four-year university course.

Which meant that he was also off on four years of earning his living while he carried the stiff work necessary to make him the sort of mining engineer he meant to be. He earned that living by handling the San Francisco papers for the campus, by taking over the agency for a laundry, by managing concerts and lectures for the university, by being secretary to his professor of geology, and, in the summer, by working with the Arkansas State and United States Geological Survey.

And while studying, while earning his living, he was having his share in the life of the students at Stanford. That share meant allying himself with the "Barbs" of his school as against the "Frats." He did that naturally for he had been brought up in the simple, democratic life of frontier towns. His sympathies were with the attempts of the "Barbs" to increase their power through organization. He was sent out to gather in the votes of a group of students who were sleeping on the bunks and cooking their meals on the kerosene stoves in the shacks left standing by the workingmen who had built the college. He got those votes. The organization was established. Later, he became treasurer of that organization.

All of which meant swinging politics—college politics—but nevertheless a game which took force, tact, and leadership. That leadership was of a peculiar sort in Herbert Hoover. He wasn't popular in the fashion of a football hero. Certainly he wasn't popular as a society fellow. But, someway, with his deep chuckle never quite coming out in a loud laugh, with his awe-inspiring ability in college finances, with his quiet decisive voice in college discussions, with his real love of sports,—he built up a place for him-

self until not to know Herbert Hoover, was not to know Stanford.

-3-

BUT those four years had to end. And by the time they had, Herbert Hoover's money had dwindled down to less than nothing. He had to earn more. He could not wait to choose what he would like to do. He had to move and move quickly. So he began as an ordinary miner, pounding, shoveling, running a hand car, in the Mayflower mine in California. He earned $2.50 for eight hours' work—day or night. He earned that together with a group of Cornish miners and he learned much about practical mining from them and from those over him. While doing that he kept hearing the name of Louis Janin, a San Francisco engineer, toward whom all of the trained men in that mine showed a marked respect. Herbert Hoover decided Louis Janin's office was the place for him to get a real start in his profession.

So, one day, after he had saved enough from his day's wages to pay his fare, he started for San Francisco and the office of Louis Janin. When he reached that office he stayed there. To be sure, he stayed for a time merely to attend to the great man's correspondence and general office routine. But, one day, that man suddenly dropped a mass of papers on the new clerk's desk and asked that clerk to work out a report from the confused material those papers contained. The job demanded all that young man's university training. More than that, it demanded just such practical experience as he had had at the Mayflower mine. And it demanded work. Hard work, day and night. When it was done, however, it was done so well that Louis Janin really saw Herbert Hoover for the first time.

After that, the road grew steadily easier for the young engineer. He was given more technical work. He was given a salary. He was sent out to mines in Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona. When he was twenty-three, Janin sent for him to come back to San Francisco and when he got there, asked him whether he wanted to leave at once for western Australia to direct the development of a gold mine there. Did he—a Hoover—want to go? Did he—a young, very young mining engineer—want such a chance? Even dazed as he was, it did not take Herbert Hoover long to say he would take the chance.

That done, he went out to find an old college friend. The two shouted wildly together. They bought clothes—three new suits. And then young Hoover was off on his world adventures—stopping at West Branch on the way, stopping also in London to talk with the firm who was sending him out to Australia. Were they a trifle surprised at his youth? Maybe so—but not so much as they would have been if he had not grown a beard while crossing the Atlantic.

Was he, himself, a little daunted when he reached that Australian mining camp? It stood in a desert, a ramshackle collection of sheds and tents, of saloons, of the usual lawless set of miners—the center of work for the ten mines which young Hoover was to take charge of developing. Whether he halted a bit in his mind, nobody knew, for he got down to business at once, riding his camel over the sands, organizing, reorganizing, sending off to America for men and machinery, and gradually bringing order and profit out of confusion and waste.

By the time he was twenty-five he was known, not only in western Australia, but wherever such men as he were needed. One of those places was in China where the Chinese

government had just established a new department of mines. Would Herbert Hoover come over and take charge of that new department? Yes, he would; but first he traveled back to California to marry Lou Henry, the girl with whom he had worked in the geological laboratory at Stanford.

To marry her and to take her with him far back into China to explore that ancient land for signs of iron, copper, lead and coal. And to find on the way, age-old manners and customs of the Chinese people. Those explorations ended with the decision that enormously wealthy coal mines lying under the surface of northeastern China should mark the real beginning of work for the department of mines. That meant living in Tientsin. It also meant being in that city when the Boxer Rebellion broke forth to shut the people of that town off from the rest of the world for four weeks behind a wall of defense thrown up and largely held by Herbert Hoover and his assistant engineers. During those weeks the Hoovers had their first experience in saving food, as well as in distributing it and medical supplies to helpless people suffering from war.

With the whole country in rebellion, the department of mines ceased to exist and Herbert Hoover's job with it. But the mines were there, so he went to Europe, secured financial support for a private firm, and then, after a trip back to America, found himself once more in China making another attempt to develop the riches he knew lay under the surface there. This time he went to Tong Shan, took charge of 25,000 men, again sent back to America for help—and the mines began to reward him by making profits for the owners. But the whole country was in conflict. Foreign armies of occupation did not help matters much. Herbert Hoover did not like any of that—so he resigned in 1901 and returned to California.

And there, at twenty-seven, he set about establishing his business. In that business he meant to center the world's interest in American—especially Californian—trained men and American mining equipment. He established headquarters in San Francisco, in New York, in London, and branch offices throughout the world. He stood ready to travel or to send his men to the help of a firm opening new mines; he stood even more ready to take a sick mine over and pull it up to its full healthy yield. He made fortunes for others. He made one for himself. He came to employ 750,000 men scattered far and wide over the earth—Hoover men, they were called because of devotion to their chief.

This work went on for a dozen years. While doing it he had found time to write his book on *Principles of Mining*. He had also found time, with Mrs. Hoover's help, to translate Agricola's volume of Latin on mining and smelting. And then when life seemed most secure for him and his fellow men, Germany marched upon Belgium.

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HERBERT HOOVER was in London when the news of that march startled the world. So were many other Americans. They needed help. He called his friends in to aid him. They advanced money, arranged steamship passages, and finally got 150,000 panic-stricken men and women started across the Atlantic. Then the Belgians called him. They had known him in China during his second stay there. What they had known made them sure he was the one man in all the world best fitted in mind and heart to help the ten million people surrounded by the enemy in their own country and northern France. The world knows the story that followed—the story of how Herbert Hoover directed the carrying of five million tons of food and clothing through the German

lines without antagonizing the officers of those lines, and after that how he directed the distribution of those supplies to the fear-stricken, hungry old people and little children scattered over that war-swept region.

The man who did that for a foreign land could not expect to escape responsibility in his own country when that country entered the war in 1917. He was called home and made United States food administrator. His high-sounding title really carried with it very little authority. But, perhaps, he did not need that for he was able to get people to work *with* him rather than *for* him. He organized the country down to the most remote crossroads. Every man and woman was made to feel he and she had a part in feeding not only their own people in America, not only the khaki-clad men over by No Man's Land, but the other men in that land fighting with them, and those other men's children back home. Some way—before they knew or realized just what was happening, citizens of the United States had reached out to share with the citizens of countries overseas. And whether they realized it or not that sharing had helped to bring them all up to a crossroad in their national life.

With the coming of Armistice Day, Herbert Hoover might have considered he was through. Of course as a Quaker, he was even more deeply glad for that day than many others. But—just to stop fighting didn't stop the hunger and sickness of people suffering for four years from war. Relief work must go on, and—after the armistice—it was to go on among the helpless victims back in the enemy's countries as well as in those of the allies. Others agreed with him. He was put at the head of the work, Congress appropriated $100,000,000. Later, this was increased by loans from both the United States and other governments. Altogether, twenty-three countries were helped by that

organized effort. Even after that money was spent there was need. Little children were hungry. Herbert Hoover could not rest until something was done to feed them. So he and a few friends came together, built up the European Children's Fund, which continued to help millions until peace was established.

<5>

ANY man who could do all of that war work of organizing, distributing, conserving, and at the same time remain a friend—equally a friend to many world powers—was too valuable not to be used by the United States government in the days of recovering from war. So thought President Harding and straightway made Herbert Hoover secretary of commerce in his cabinet. President Coolidge kept him on in the same position. Trade was sick. Men were fearful. Secretary Hoover called this group and that group into conference with him. Business assurance began to appear. He assembled all the knowledge available from foreign markets. He worked to standardize production. It is claimed that under him the export trade, alone, of the United States increased in value, at least half a billion dollars a year. And nobody has yet dared to measure how far-reaching his program still runs into the future.

Of course, such a man as Herbert Hoover could not escape the clutch of political leaders. Up until his work in the cabinet, he had never been particularly interested in their plans or policies. Even after that work was under way he protested when some of his Republican friends tried to nominate him for president in 1924. That attempt failed, but in 1928 the whole party was awake to the promise of success through him. He was, therefore, easily nominated. In the campaign that followed, he made but few speeches

over the country. There was one out at Palo Alto to which all of the triumphant alumni of Stanford "tuned in." There was another at West Branch to which every plain American citizen did the same in order to hear Herbert Hoover talk in everyday friendliness with his old neighbors. There were others to which the whole world listened—listened in approval. In the end the people of the United States spoke in no uncertain voice. Herbert Hoover went into the White House by one of the most astounding majorities the country had ever given to any man.

6

And then not only the United States but the world leaned back, took a long breath, and watched Herbert Hoover. There had been many a lawyer, a few gallant generals, one college professor among the twenty-nine presidents who had gone before; but there had never been a mining engineer. There had been many a politician in that line who had come up from his own home-town office, serving in every intervening place of authority on the way to Washington; but there was no one who had stepped out of his own professional experience directly into the cabinet and from there into the presidency. There had been many a diplomat who had served in foreign capitals and then brought his experience to serve the American people in foreign relations; but where had there been a man among that whole twenty-nine who had brought the experience of matching wits with those of big business operating all over the globe; where was there one who had lived as a neighbor with so many remote peoples; where was there one who had had the great opportunity, and the leadership to make the most of that opportunity, to serve both world friend and world foe in time of great calamity? What

would this man—Herbert Hoover—do, what could he not do, men asked themselves, with all of this very practical experience, all of this very intimate knowledge of world affairs, all of this gift for understanding and helping his neighbor both at home and abroad?

What sort of a world did he see as he looked out from his new place of vantage? Overseas the nations were struggling valiantly to get back on their feet after the devastating loss of life and property they had met during the World War. Debt, war debt, was clogging their progress at every turn. At home, in America, Calvin Coolidge had stepped out of the presidency to look back on a land where big business was fairly purring in the sunshine of prosperous days. To be sure the farmers were not purring. In fact they were growling most threateningly, for the very overabundance of their fields was bringing them distress by crowding the markets and thus lowering prices. Generally speaking, therefore, Herbert Hoover looked out on March 4, 1929, to see an America groaning with plenty.

Now, strange as it may seem, it was that very plenty which was to be America's undoing and to bring a distressing setback to the brilliant promise of President Hoover's administration. Because men, through speculation, were making fortunes overnight, because others were heaping up chests of treasure already full to spilling, even wise men and women lost their heads and a raging fever of speculation spread over the whole land. Then, suddenly, there came the Wall Street crash. That was in October, 1929. Vast fortunes, one after another, were swept away. Lifetime savings of people with only moderate incomes vanished. A panic of fear swept the land. Nobody would buy anything, anywhere. Business, so recently gloating in safety, now found its very foundations slipping out from

under it. Employees were discharged right and left. And in the same centers where plenty had so recently reigned, want set up long heart-breaking bread lines.

Following that winter of fear and widespread want, the summer of 1930 came bringing a drought which shriveled the Eastern and Middle West crops as if a vast fire had swept over the fields. Cattle suffered and died from thirst. Whole families grew gaunt with hunger.

What was Herbert Hoover doing all of this time? What could he do? Well, he could keep his campaign pledges—or try to do so. So a Federal Farm Board was set up, a revision of agricultural tariff rates was planned, and a revolving fund of $500,000,000 was established to aid the suffering farmer. A high tariff bill—a very high one—was put through, according to the usual Republican policy, and met, also as usual, with a stampede of public disapproval. Appropriations were made to start public improvements and thus give work to thousands of unemployed. In all, by the end of his first two years, President Hoover had put into execution a very creditable list of acts to relieve the financial depression.

Now, if that financial sickness had been confined to the United States alone, perhaps it could have been checked before it got so far under way. But, as has been said, European money markets were already tottering. They continued to do so more and more dangerously; especially those of Germany, which quite naturally was burdened most heavily with that war's debts and reparations. England, the United States, France, Italy, Belgium, Japan —all of the nations which had heavy payments coming due from the government of Germany looked anxiously toward Berlin. Whatever affected the treasury there was bound to affect treasuries all over the world. The day had come

when no nation could lose or gain without every other nation losing and gaining with it. Something had to be done to strengthen Germany's credit, to give her time to readjust her business affairs.

It was in those days of stress that Herbert Hoover, sweeping the skyline of the world's need, sent a message winging its way toward the east. Why not take a year's holiday on war-debt payments, that message asked. Why not? America was ready, so he claimed. Were the other great nations also ready? Would they all share in bringing relief to Germany and thus give her a chance to live? Would they, by so doing, also help themselves? With a joy only second to that felt when the Americans swept into No Man's Land, the majority of the nations immediately decided to take that holiday. As if by magic, markets sprang into activity again. But the delay caused by weighing this and that possibility, caused that activity to dwindle before the holiday was finally and universally set going.

What did the American people think of their President's plan for a year's holiday on war-debt payments? That holiday meant that the income of the United States would be lowered by many, many millions of dollars. And this at just the time when financial distress lay heavily over the land. Nevertheless, Americans cheered their President, cheered him proudly and lustily for the swift and wise courage he had shown in sending his message.

Once before, America had had cause to cheer President Hoover's world vision. That was after he and Ramsay MacDonald, England's Prime Minister, had sat on a log in the President's Rapidan camp and discussed the furtherance of what both wanted to bring about more than any other one thing—world peace. The influence of that hour's quiet talk among the Virginia hills was felt in London

later, when a treaty was ratified to limit their navy fleets by Great Britain, the United States, and Japan. Twice, therefore—at least twice—Herbert Hoover in his first two years had fearlessly—standing where "two roads diverged"—stepped out down the "one less traveled by." Both times the American people had approved. Perhaps, after all, they were far more ready to travel that way than they dreamed they were.

And all through these troublesome two years, Herbert Hoover has been steadily, purposefully following out one great desire—the desire to make the children of today stronger for their tomorrow than any generation before them has ever been. To that end he has never let anything of financial anxiety, anything of political worry, interfere with his White House Conference for Children. If his plans are carried out, every child in this land, rich or poor, high or low, will have his chance to grow sounder in body, more far-seeing in mind, more friendly in spirit.

If he accomplishes that for America's children; if he maintains the world friendliness he has been so largely responsible for developing, who can measure just what Herbert Hoover's administration is to mean to America, to the world, when it finally takes its place among those of the past?

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